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**Press Contact:**  
[Hannah Sundwall](#)  
[312-294-3083](#)

## SEPTEMBER PROGRAMMING AT SYMPHONY CENTER

CHICAGO — September programming presented by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association (CSOA) at Symphony Center officially opens the 2025/26 Season, which marks the 135th Season for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO). The month's programming highlights include the CSO's first performances of composer Camille Pépin's *Les Eaux célestes* and return performances by conductors Nikolaj Szeps-Znaider and Mikko Franck. Audiences can also look forward to appearances by CSO Principal Viola Teng Li, pianist Alice Sara Ott and CSO Artist-in-Residence Joyce DiDonato.

The Symphony Center Presents (SCP) series kicks off with a special performance celebrating "The Queen of Ranchera Music," Aida Cuevas. Titled *50 Years Singing to México*, the concert on September 26 is a journey through her iconic hits, marking her golden anniversary in music.

Tickets and more information are available at [cso.org](https://www.cso.org).

[Explore](#) a chronological list of September 2025 concert programs.

### **Chicago Symphony Orchestra**

#### **Season Opening with Szeps-Znaider ([September 18-19](#))**

One of the most heartfelt musical dialogues ever written, the Sinfonia concertante shows Mozart at the pinnacle of his craft. As violinist, Nikolaj Szeps-Znaider shares the spotlight with CSO Principal Viola Teng Li. Szeps-Znaider conducts Elgar's stately, visionary Second Symphony, a work dedicated to the memory of England's Edward VII.

#### **Joyce DiDonato & the CSO ([September 20](#))**

Mezzo-soprano and 2025/26 CSO Artist-in-Residence Joyce DiDonato joins Nikolaj Szeps-Znaider and the CSO for a celebratory program of vocal pieces by Richard

Strauss and Georges Bizet, stirring overtures by Weber and Wagner and selections from Mendelssohn's enchanting *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Walk the red carpet and toast to the start of another incredible season.

Enhance your concert experience with a Symphony Ball gala package, including a private preconcert reception for patrons and sponsors in Buntrock Hall and postconcert dinner and dancing at the Four Seasons Hotel Chicago. For more information, please email [symphonyball@csso.org](mailto:symphonyball@csso.org) or call [312-294-3185](tel:312-294-3185).

This benefit event raises funds to support the multifaceted work of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association — not only its industry-leading artistic programs but also its educational and community engagement initiatives that nurture tens of thousands of people in Chicago and around the world annually. More information is available at [csso.org/symphonyball](https://csso.org/symphonyball).

### **Ravel Piano Concertos & Suite from Carmen** ([September 25-28](#))

Ravel's jazz-fueled Piano Concerto in G Major fits Alice Sara Ott "like a custom suit," raves *The New York Times*. Ott presents the glittering score alongside Ravel's magnificent Piano Concerto for the Left Hand. Bizet's fiery *Carmen* Suite and Camille Pépin's shimmering *Les Eaux célestes*, led by esteemed conductor Mikko Franck, expand upon the French theme.

### **Symphony Center Presents**

### **Aida Cuevas: 50 Years Singing to México** ([September 26](#))

Prepare for an evening of passion, tradition and the soul-stirring beauty of timeless music. Aida Cuevas, the unrivaled queen of ranchera music and "La Voz de México" (the Voice of Mexico), celebrates her 50th anniversary as an ambassador of Mexican and Latin American music. Journey through decades of iconic hits, including "El Pastor," "Quizás Mañana" and many more — all performed with her signature elegance, artistry and heartfelt authenticity.

### **Parking and Transit Options**

Exclusive parking rates are available through Millennium Garages, the Preferred Parking Partner for Symphony Center. The closest parking garage is the Grant Park South Garage, located at 325 S. Michigan Ave. Valet parking is available for CSO Classical performances at Symphony Center's 67 E. Adams St. entrance. A round-trip North Shore Shuttle service is available for Friday matinees. Visit [csso.org/parking](https://csso.org/parking) for more parking and transit options.

## **Patron Information**

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), Tuesday - Saturday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

All artists and programs are subject to change.

United Airlines is the Official Airline of the CSO.

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association acknowledges support from the Illinois Arts Council.

Northern Trust is the presenting sponsor of Symphony Ball.

The Artist-in-Residence at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra is made possible through a generous gift from James and Brenda Grusecki.

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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 10th music director from 2010 until 2023, became Music Director Emeritus for Life at the beginning of the 2023/24 Season. Joyce DiDonato is the CSO Artist-in-Residence for the 2025/26 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 domestically, and since 1892, has made 65 international tours, performing in 30 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 Negaunee Music Institute. The [Chicago Symphony Chorus](https://www.cso.org/chicago-symphony-chorus), founded by Margaret Hillis in 1957, is the country's largest professional chorus. Donald Palumbo is the Director of the Chicago Symphony Chorus. Founded by second music director Frederick Stock during the 1919/20 Season, the [Civic Orchestra of Chicago](https://www.cso.org/civic-orchestra-of-chicago) 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.