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2022 CHICAGO YOUTH IN MUSIC FESTIVAL AND
NATIONAL PATHWAYS SUMMIT COMPLETES SUCCESSFUL
SET OF EVENTS IN CHICAGO

CSO Music Director Riccardo Muti Led Side-by-Side Orchestra of
More Than 100 Musicians in Free, Open Rehearsal at Symphony Center to
Conclude Festival on April 11

50 High School Musicians from 10 U.S. Cities and Music Education Leaders and
Partners Assembled in Chicago to Participate in Three Days of Workshops,
Rehearsals, Discussions and Cultural Activities

CHICAGO – The Chicago Youth in Music Festival (CYMF) took place April 9-11, 2022,
representing an ambitious nationwide partnership spanning 10 cities. Participating in the
expanded Festival — the first since 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic — were 50 young
musicians who are affiliated with pathways programs in Chicago, Baltimore, Philadelphia,
Boston, Atlanta, Nashville, San Antonio, Cleveland, Cincinnati and Washington, D.C. These
pathways programs provide a broad array of training and other resources to students whose
backgrounds are underrepresented in American orchestras. The weekend also included the
inaugural National Pathways Summit bringing together music teachers, administrators, and
families of music students, who participated in workgroup meetings on topics such as program
sustainability, efficacy, and building a national network. Lina González-Granados, the Chicago
Symphony Orchestra’s Sir Georg Solti Conducting Apprentice, led Festival Orchestra
preparatory rehearsals that culminated with student musicians playing Liszt’s Les préludes side-
by-side with musicians from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO), Civic Orchestra of
Chicago and Chicago Sinfonietta’s Project Inclusion, in a free open rehearsal led by CSO Music
Director Riccardo Muti on Monday, April 11 at Symphony Center. Watch video from the April 11
open rehearsal in a CBS-2 segment available here.

Muti led more than 100 musicians in the Festival Orchestra in front of an enthusiastic audience
as part of his recent residency activities in Chicago. Since becoming music director of the CSO
in 2010, Muti has maintained a commitment to training the next generation of musicians, having
led a number of open rehearsals at the Festival and with the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, as well as a remote coaching session on Zoom in 2021 with musicians from the Chicago Musical Pathways Initiative (CMPI). Muti welcomed the musicians and audience to the open rehearsal noting: “The orchestra is an example of how a society should be. The different instruments play different parts, not one against the other but together in harmony.”

The 2022 Chicago Youth in Music Festival was presented by the Negaunee Music Institute (NMI) at the CSO in partnership with the National Instrumentalist Mentoring and Advancement Network (NIMAN) and Chicago Musical Pathways Initiative (CMPI).

Stanford Thompson, board chair of the National Instrumentalist Mentorship and Advancement Network, added: “This year’s side-by-side rehearsal has offered a tremendous opportunity for the next generation of classical musicians to be coached by professionals while allowing arts leaders from across the country to discover new ways to support their advancement.”

According to Jonathan McCormick, director of education at the Negaunee Music Institute at the CSO, it’s important for students “to engage with peers who have similar dreams, aspirations and challenges. The Youth in Music Festival offered a rigorous musical experience and a social event as well, so the orchestra could really bond.” Speaking about the opportunity to make music alongside professional and pre-professional musicians, McCormick added: “It’s so meaningful to play alongside a musician who is more advanced than you are. This can really accelerate a student’s growth.”

The 2022 Chicago Youth in Music Festival follows the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association’s recent announcement of a CSO Fellowship Program that seeks to welcome early-career musicians from populations that have traditionally been underrepresented in American symphony orchestras, including, but not limited to, those who identify as Black, Latino or Indigenous. Applications for the 2022-23 season are currently being accepted at cso.org/fellowship. The new program is part of the CSOA’s ongoing commitment to creating training opportunities for the next generation of musicians that also includes the Percussion Scholarship Program, Chicago Musical Pathways Initiative (CMPI) and Sphinx Orchestral Partners Auditions and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago.

Access additional 2022 Chicago Youth in Music Festival and National Pathways Summit press materials and photos here.

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

The 2022 Chicago Youth in Music Festival was generously sponsored by Megan and Steve Shebik and Michael and Linda Simon.

The National Pathways Summit was generously sponsored by the Paul M. Angell Family Foundation.
Special thanks to William Harris Lee & Co. for their generous loan of fine string instruments to select students participating in the 2022 Chicago Youth in Music Festival.

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About the Chicago Youth in Music Festival

The Chicago Youth in Music Festival began in 2009 and was created to support and inspire young musicians who are passionate about symphony orchestras. Each Festival is presented in partnership with local, national, and sometimes international organizations, and includes rehearsals, workshops and performances that inspire the next generation of musicians.

The 2022 Festival and National Pathways Summit is centered around organizations that nurture young musicians whose backgrounds are underrepresented in American orchestras. The national scope of the project highlights the extraordinary work of programs in Chicago and around the country and celebrates the diversity of participants.

About the Festival Partners

The 2022 Chicago Youth in Music Festival was presented in partnership and co-hosted by the Chicago Musical Pathways Initiative (CMPI), the National Instrumentalist Mentoring and Advancement Network (NIMAN) and the Negaunee Music Institute (NMI) at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO).

The Negaunee Music Institute at the CSO is a co-founder and member of the advisory council for the Chicago Musical Pathways Initiative (CMPI), which launched in the 2019-20 season with the mission of preparing young musicians from underrepresented backgrounds to attend top music schools and thus ultimately helping to diversify American orchestras. The Chicago Youth in Music Festival provided an opportunity for the two groups to expand this work nationally by collaborating with NIMAN, which is a national coalition that works to align, promote and develop equitable opportunities and inclusive environments to advance BIPOC [Black, indigenous and people of color] instrumentalists to thrive in classical music.

National partners for the Festival and Summit:

Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Talent Development Program
Boston BEAM
Cincinnati Symphony Nouveau Program
Cleveland Institute of Music Musical Pathway Fellowship
Merit School of Music
Nashville Symphony Accelerando
Peabody Preparatory Baltimore Pathways Program
PMAY Artists’ Initiative
Washington Musical Pathways Initiative
Youth Orchestra San Antonio Rising Star Fellows