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RICCARDO MUTI RETURNS TO CHICAGO TO LEAD TWO CSO PROGRAMS THIS FALL

OCTOBER 30-NOVEMBER 8

CHICAGO — Riccardo Muti, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's Music Director Emeritus for Life, returns to Chicago in October. He continues his artistic collaboration with the CSO following 13 years of celebrated partnership with the Orchestra as music director from 2010 to 2023.

Muti returns to conduct two distinct subscription programs with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) in late October and early November. His first program, "Muti Conducts Strauss, Hindemith & Dvořák 9" (October 30-November 4), features Dvořák's beloved Symphony No. 9 (*From the New World*), known for its glorious melodies inspired by American folk songs and spirituals blended with a longing for his Czech homeland. The program also includes Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler* (composed in 1939), which explores a Renaissance artist's struggle against political repression. The November 4 performance of this program takes place at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, continuing Muti and the CSO's history of appearances there in 2013, 2016 and 2024. Additionally, during the November 1 performance, Muti will honor retired CSO musicians Joyce Noh (violin) and Lynne Turner (harp), with the Theodore Thomas Medallion for Distinguished Service.

Muti's second subscription program, "Muti & Sáinz-Villegas" (November 6-8), features Spanish guitarist Pablo Sáinz-Villegas performing Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*, a musical portrait of the royal palace and gardens near Madrid. Sáinz-Villegas' 2019 CSO performance was praised for its "sheen of his tone and the nobility of his rhythms" by the *Chicago Tribune*. Muti also leads the CSO in Brahms' Fourth Symphony, a work that blends warmth and poignant anguish culminating in a tempestuous finale. Following the Thursday, November 6 concert, the CSO Latino Alliance hosts a

celebratory reception for Sáinz-Villegas.

Later in the 2025/26 Season, Muti leads the CSO on a two-week [U.S. tour](#) to the West Coast, from January 15-24, 2026. The tour begins in Mesa, AZ, and makes the following stops in California (Berkeley, Davis, Palm Desert, Northridge, Santa Barbara and Costa Mesa). In Muti's spring 2026 residency, he leads an Italian opera program with the Chicago Symphony Chorus and distinguished soloists, as well as a program including Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 3 (*Polish*) and music from the film scores for *The Godfather* and *The Leopard* by Italian composer Nino Rota, who was one of Muti's early mentors and teachers. An online article and photo gallery on [Experience CSO](#) recaps Muti's 2025 concert activities around the world since his last appearance with the CSO in June.

For program, ticket and patron information, visit cso.org.

Muti Conducts Strauss, Hindemith & Dvořák 9 ([October 30-November 4](#))

Music Director Emeritus for Life Riccardo Muti leads the CSO in a program featuring works by Strauss, Hindemith, and Dvořák.

The program includes Dvořák's Symphony No. 9, *From the New World*, which incorporates the folk songs and spirituals the composer encountered while in America alongside expressions of his longing for his Czech homeland. It is paired with Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler*, a symphony composed in 1934 (not 1939) that depicts the struggles of a Renaissance artist against political repression. The concert set opens with Johann Strauss, Jr.'s Overture to *The Gypsy Baron*.

Muti will use the November 1 performance to present the Theodore Thomas Medallion for Distinguished Service to retired CSO musicians, specifically Joyce Noh (violin) and Lynne Turner (harp).

The CSO returns to Krannert Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign on [November 4](#).

Muti & Sáinz-Villegas ([November 6-8](#))

Music Director Emeritus for Life Riccardo Muti leads his second subscription program featuring Spanish guitarist Pablo Sáinz-Villegas. Sáinz-Villegas performs Joaquín Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*, a captivating musical portrait of the royal palace and gardens near Madrid. Sáinz-Villegas is an admired soloist whose 2019 CSO appearance was recognized by the *Chicago Tribune* for how he "immediately dusted away the clichés, thanks to the sheen of his tone and the nobility of his rhythms."

The program also includes Brahms' Symphony No. 4, a work conducted by Muti that combines warmth and poignant anguish, concluding with an intense finale.

Following the concert on Thursday, November 6, the CSO Latino Alliance hosts a networking reception plus Sáinz-Villegas in discussion with WFMT's Oliver Camacho. Tickets required for entry. Learn more about the event at [CSO Latino Alliance](#).

Food and Beverage

Explore Symphony Center's on-site dining options for a seamless preconcert experience. Preorder a Sound Bites meal to enjoy in the Rotunda at Symphony Center before the concert — or make a reservation to dine at the Thomas Club, offering a prix fixe menu featuring traditional American fare and a spectacular view of lake Michigan. View menus and learn more at cso.org/dining.

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 select performances at Symphony Center's 67 E. Adams St. entrance. A round-trip North Shore Shuttle service is available for Friday matinees. Visit cso.org/parking for more parking and transit options.

Patron Information

Contact Patron Services for personalized assistance online at cso.org/contact or by calling [312-294-3000](tel:312-294-3000), Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

All artists and programs are subject to change.

The October 30 to November 4 and November 6-8 performances are made possible by the Juli Plant Grainger Fund for Artistic Excellence.

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Riccardo Muti

Riccardo Muti is one of the world's preeminent conductors. The Chicago Symphony Orchestra's distinguished tenth music director from 2010 until 2023, Muti was named Music Director Emeritus for Life beginning with the 2023/24 Season.

His leadership has been distinguished by the strength of his artistic partnership with the Orchestra; his dedication to performing great works of the past and present, including sixteen world premieres to date; the enthusiastic reception he and the CSO have received on national and international tours; and twelve recordings on the CSO Resound label, with three Grammy awards among them. In addition, Muti's contributions to the cultural life of Chicago—with performances throughout its many neighborhoods and at Orchestra Hall—have made a lasting impact on the city.

Born in Naples, Riccardo Muti studied piano under Vincenzo Vitale at the Conservatory of San Pietro a Majella, graduating with distinction. He subsequently received a diploma in composition and conducting from the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory in Milan under the guidance of Bruno Bettinelli and Antonino Votto.

He first came to the attention of critics and the public in 1967, when he won the Guido Cantelli Conducting Competition, by unanimous vote of the jury, in Milan. In 1968, he became principal conductor of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, a position he held until 1980. In 1971, Muti was invited by Herbert von Karajan to conduct at the Salzburg Festival, the first of many occasions, which led to a celebration of fifty years of artistic collaboration with the Austrian festival in 2020. During the 1970s, Muti was chief conductor of London's Philharmonia Orchestra (1972–1982) succeeding Otto Klemperer. From 1980 to 1992, he inherited the position of music director of the Philadelphia Orchestra from Eugene Ormandy. From 1986 to 2005, he was music director of Teatro alla Scala, and during this time, he directed major projects such as the three Mozart/Da Ponte operas and Wagner's *Ring* cycle in addition to his exceptional contributions to the Verdi repertoire. Alongside the classics, he brought many rarely performed and neglected works to light, including pieces from the Neapolitan school, as well as operas by Gluck, Cherubini and Spontini. Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites* earned Muti the prestigious Abbiati Prize. His tenure as music director of Teatro alla Scala, the longest in its history, culminated in the triumphant reopening of the restored opera house on Dec. 7, 2004, with Salieri's *Europa riconosciuta*.

Over the course of his extraordinary career, Riccardo Muti has conducted the most important orchestras in the world: from the Berlin Philharmonic to the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and from the New York Philharmonic to the Orchestre National de France; as well as the Vienna Philharmonic, an orchestra to which he is linked by particularly close and important ties, and with which he has appeared at the Salzburg Festival since 1971.

When Muti was invited to lead the Vienna Philharmonic's 150th-anniversary concert, the orchestra presented him with the Golden Ring, a special sign of esteem and affection, awarded only to a few select conductors. In 2021, he conducted the Vienna Philharmonic in the New Year's Concert for the sixth time, having previously led the concert in 1993, 1997, 2000, 2004, and 2018. The 2018 recording went double platinum, and the 2021 concert received the prestigious audience award, the Romy Prize in the TV Moment of the Year category.

In April 2003, the French national radio channel, France Musique, broadcast a "Journée Riccardo Muti," consisting of fourteen hours of his operatic and symphonic recordings made with all the orchestras he has conducted throughout his career. On Dec. 14 of the same year, he conducted the long-awaited opening concert of the newly renovated La Fenice opera house in Venice. Radio France broadcast another "Riccardo Muti Day" on May 17, 2018, when he led a concert at the Auditorium de la Maison de la Radio.

Muti's recording activities, already notable by the 1970s and distinguished since by many awards, range from symphonic music and opera to contemporary compositions. The label RMMusic is responsible for Riccardo Muti's recordings.

In September 2010, Riccardo Muti became music director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and was named 2010 Musician of the Year by *Musical America*. At the 53rd annual *Grammy Awards* ceremony in 2011, his live performance of Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus was awarded Grammy awards for Best Classical Album and Best Choral Performance. In 2011, Muti was selected as the recipient of the coveted Birgit Nilsson Prize, presented in a ceremony at the Royal Opera in Stockholm in the presence of King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia. In 2011, he received the Opera News Award in New York City, and he was awarded Spain's prestigious Prince of

Asturias Prize for the Arts. That summer, he was named an honorary member of the Vienna Philharmonic and honorary director for life of the Rome Opera. In May 2012, he was awarded the highest papal honor: the Knight of the Grand Cross First Class of the Order of St. Gregory the Great by Pope Benedict XVI. In 2016, he was honored by the Japanese government with the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star.

Muti has received numerous international honors over the course of his career. He is Cavaliere di Gran Croce of the Italian Republic and a recipient of the German Verdienstkreuz. He received the decoration of Officer of the Legion of Honor from French President Nicolas Sarkozy in a private ceremony held at the Élysée Palace. He was made an honorary Knight Commander of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth II in Britain. The Salzburg Mozarteum awarded him its silver medal for his contribution to Mozart's music, and in Vienna, he was elected an honorary member of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Vienna Hofmusikkapelle and Vienna State Opera. The State of Israel has honored him with the Wolf Prize in the arts. In July 2018, President Petro Poroshenko presented Muti with the State Award of Ukraine during the Roads of Friendship concert at the Ravenna Festival in Italy following earlier performances in Kiev. In October 2018, Muti received the prestigious Praemium Imperiale for Music of the Japan Arts Association in Tokyo. Muti received the Great Golden Decoration of Honor for Services to the Republic of Austria, the highest possible civilian honor from the Austrian government, in August 2021. In addition, he has received more than twenty honorary degrees from the most important universities in 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 four 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 in May 2019, and *The Seven Last Words of Christ: a Dialogue with Massimo Cacciari*, published in 2020; both titles are available in Italian.

riccardomuti.com

riccardomutioperacademy.com

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Chicago Symphony Orchestra: 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. Launched in 2007, [CSO Resound](http://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](#), 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](#) is a training ensemble for emerging professionals with Ken-David Masur serving as its principal conductor. [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.