

**For Immediate Release:**  
August 13, 2024

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## **CSO FOR KIDS OFFERS PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES AT SYMPHONY CENTER IN THE 2024/25 SEASON**

### **New CSO for Kids Digital Release: *The Rhythm of the Rain***

CHICAGO — CSO for Kids programming encompasses a wide variety of live concerts and digital offerings that immerse listeners in the magical world of symphonic music. The 2024/25 Season begins in October with the first of three Saturday Family Matinee programs, that showcase orchestral masterworks and incorporate theatre, dance or multimedia to deepen audience engagement with the music. Additional school performances, which offer special access and bus transportation for Chicago Public Schools (CPS), are also available and annually welcome more than 20,000 school children to Symphony Center. The Once Upon a Symphony series offers two story-inspired programs and opens in December. The newest CSO for Kids digital release — *The Rhythm of the Rain* — is part of a series of free, on-demand online videos that invite young audiences to experience music and children's books. CSO for Kids programming is supported by the [Negaunee Music Institute at the CSO](#).

More information about CSO for Kids concert programming and digital content is available at [cso.org](http://cso.org).

### **CSO for Kids**

Family Matinee concerts take place at two convenient Saturday matinee times (11:00 a.m. or 12:45 p.m.) and are perfect for families with children ages 5-12. These hour-long performances take place in historic Orchestra Hall at Symphony Center in downtown Chicago and feature fun and engaging kid-friendly programs performed by members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO).

### **Philharmonia Fantastique ([October 19](#))**

Follow a magical sprite as it takes audiences inside musical instruments and shows how they work together as an orchestra. Created by former CSO Mead Composer-in-Residence Mason Bates and an Oscar-winning creative team, this film with live music builds to a spectacular finale. The program features the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eric Jacobsen, music director of the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra.

### **The Music of Our Emotions** ([March 8, 2025](#))

Canadian conductor Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser leads members of the CSO in a program featuring the music of Tchaikovsky. It highlights the composer's courageous journey and demonstrates how music helps all of us express our emotions.

### **Community Pride** ([May 3, 2025](#))

Join distinguished guest conductor Thomas Wilkins and members of the CSO for a concert that pairs well-known classics with contemporary masterpieces to demonstrate the joy, power and beauty of coming together in service of something bigger than ourselves. The program features a performance by the winner of the 2024 Crain-Maling Foundation CSO Young Artists Competition, Jaden Teague-Núñez on steelpan.

### **CSO for Kids School Concerts: Elementary School Concerts and Youth Concerts**

Student groups grades K-5 are invited to participate in performances of CSO for Kids. [Philharmonia Fantastique](#) will be performed for students on Thursday, October 17 and Friday, October 18; [The Music of Our Emotions](#) on Friday, March 7, 2025, and [Community Pride](#) on Friday, May 2, 2025. School concerts occur each date at 10:15 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.

Free tickets and transportation are provided to CPS schools attending these performances. To complete a school group reservation form online, visit [cso.org](http://cso.org), or call the Education Concerts Hotline at [312-294-3076](tel:312-294-3076) during regular business hours for more information.

### **Once Upon a Symphony**

Once Upon a Symphony is the CSO's family-friendly, weekend matinee concert series for young audiences ages 3-5. The series is presented in Buntrock Hall at Symphony Center, and weaves together musical selections, performed by members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO), with storytelling, sets, costumes and multimedia elements to create a captivating and magical introduction to live music for children.

### **The Little Red Hen** (December 7 | January 11, 2025 | February 1, 2025)

A cow, horse and pig all turn down the Little Red Hen's requests for help planting wheat, grinding flour and baking bread — and are disappointed when the hen eats the delicious bread all by herself. Featuring delightful musical portraits of animals, this classic children's tale explores the importance of working together as a community. The program features music performed by musicians of the CSO and a master storyteller, with sets, costumes and images created by Chicago Children's Theatre.

### **Abiyoyo** (April 5, 2025 | April 19, 2025 | May 10, 2025)

In this South African folktale adapted by singer-songwriter Pete Seeger, a boy and his father are banished from their town for making mischief. They are welcomed back when they find a way to make a monster named Abiyoyo disappear. This redemptive story features enchanting music performed by musicians of the CSO and a master storyteller, with sets, costumes and images created by Chicago Children's Theatre.

In addition to the Saturday family performances of Once Upon a Symphony, schools are invited to participate in the CSO for Kids School Concerts program: Once Upon a Symphony for Pre-K. This program introduces preschool students to the excitement and wonder of classical music with concerts that are designed especially for children and performed by members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Free tickets and transportation are provided to CPS schools attending Once Upon a Symphony for Pre-K performances on select Mondays this season and can be reserved at [cso.org](https://www.cso.org).

[The Little Red Hen](#) will be performed for students on Monday, December 9 and Monday, February 3, 2025, and [Abiyoyo](#) will be performed for students on Monday, April 7, 2025, and Monday, April 21, 2025. School performance times on each date are at 10:15 and 11:30 a.m.

### **CSO for Kids Digital**

The CSO for Kids Digital series provides free, educational videos that support the social and emotional needs of children. Each video is based on a popular children's book and features classical music performed by CSO musicians, with animation inspired by the book's illustrations. Accompanying the videos are preparatory guides that offer activities and resources for teachers and parents.

The latest digital release, [The Rhythm of the Rain](#), is the animated story about a boy's adventure through the water cycle. The story, written by Grahame Baker-Smith, is narrated by CSO bassoon Miles Maner and features the CSO performing Smetana's *The Moldau*.

CSO for Kids videos are available for free, on-demand viewing on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com).

### **Patron Information**

Tickets for CSO for Kids: Family Matinees start at \$15 per performance, and tickets for Once Upon a Symphony performances start at \$10 per performance. Patron Services representatives are available to assist with ticket purchases by web chat at [cso.org](https://www.cso.org) 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.

Youth Education Program Sponsor – Allstate Insurance Company

Family Matinee Sponsor – Abbott Fund

CSO for Kids Concerts and CPS Partnerships Sponsor – BMO Harris

Support for Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association programming for children and families is provided by John Hart and Carol Prins, Kinder Morgan, PNC, Megan and Steve Shebik, Michael and Linda Simon, the Walter and Caroline Sueske Charitable Trust and an anonymous family foundation.

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**Chicago Symphony Orchestra: [csso.org](https://www.csso.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 [csso.org/radio](https://www.csso.org/radio). Launched in 2007, [CSO Resound](https://www.csso.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.csso.org/chicago-symphony-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.csso.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.csso.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](https://www.csso.org/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.