

**For Immediate Release:**  
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## **YOUNGJI KIM ANNOUNCED AS THE NEWEST MEMBER OF THE CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

CHICAGO – The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association (CSOA) announces the appointment of Youngji Kim to the first violin section of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO). Kim won the final audition for the position in October 2025 and officially joins the Orchestra on June 15, 2026. She is the seventh musician appointed by [Zell Music Director Designate Klaus Mäkelä](#).

A native of Korea, Youngji Kim most recently served as a member of the Cleveland Orchestra, where she received tenure in 2024. Previously, she was a member of the Minnesota Orchestra, joining the ensemble after winning an audition in 2022. She also won an audition with the Colorado Symphony Orchestra.

An active orchestral and solo performer, Kim has appeared with ensembles including Yale Philharmonia, the New Haven Symphony Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Aspen Conducting Academy Orchestra and the Korean Symphony Orchestra. As a soloist, she has performed with the Korean Symphony Orchestra, KBS Symphony Orchestra, Seoul National University Symphony Orchestra and Gyeonggi Philharmonic Orchestra, and she has presented solo recitals at venues including Kumho Art Hall and Gyeonggi Arts Center. Kim was also featured in the String Showcase at the Aspen Music Festival and School.

Kim has earned numerous honors and top prizes in international competitions such as the HKGNA International Music Competition. She was also named a Kumho Young Artist.

She holds a master of music degree from the Yale School of Music, where she studied with Ani Kavafian, and a bachelor of music degree from Seoul National University, where her teachers included Ju-Young Baek and Hyuk Joo Kwon.

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

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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](#) 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](#), 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.