



For Immediate Release:
September 12, 2024

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CIVIC ORCHESTRA OF CHICAGO ANNOUNCES PROGRAM DETAILS FOR 2024/25 SEASON PERFORMANCES

Principal Conductor Ken-David Masur Leads Concerts at Symphony Center and in Communities Across the City; Extended as Principal Conductor through the 2026/27 Season

Civic Welcomes Guest Conductors Erina Yashima, Alexander Shelley, Michael Mulcahy, Jerry Hou, Carlos Miguel Prieto and Thomas Wilkins

Civic Expands Its Presence in Chicago Area Neighborhoods with Six Free Full Orchestra Performances and Free Chamber Concerts

CHICAGO—The Civic Orchestra of Chicago, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s prestigious training ensemble for emerging professional musicians, announces program details for its 2024/25 Season. Tickets for Civic’s opening concert with Principal Conductor Ken-David Masur on October 28 at Symphony Center are pay what you wish, starting at \$5. Tickets to Civic concerts in community venues are free, but advance reservations are required; all ticket reservations open two weeks prior to the performance date. More information is available at [cso.org](https://www.cso.org).

Founded in 1919 by the CSO’s second music director, Frederick Stock, the Civic Orchestra marks its 106th Season in 2024/25. In the year ahead, Ken-David Masur will continue in his role as Civic Principal Conductor, leading programs at Symphony Center in October, January and June. Two of these programs will be repeated at Chicago Public Schools (Senn High School and a high school to be announced). Masur also leads the Bach Marathon and its culminating concert at Fourth Presbyterian Church. Highlights of his three mainstage programs include Schumann’s Symphony No. 3 (*Rhenish*), Rachmaninov’s Symphony No. 2 and Sibelius’ Symphony No. 2, as well as groundbreaking works by Gabriela Ortiz, Valerie Coleman, Jessie Montgomery and Andrea Tarrodi.

Masur's appointment as The Robert Kohl and Clark Pellett Principal Conductor has been extended through the 2026/27 Season. He assumed the role in the 2019/20 Season after guest conducting the Civic Orchestra annually beginning in the 2016/17 Season.

"I am thrilled to continue my partnership with the Civic Orchestra. The musicians' dedication to their craft and mission for their music careers is a deep inspiration. It brings me great joy to work with and mentor them, as together we deeply value the richness of sharing music with communities across Chicago. Civic is a jewel among the world's orchestral training programs."

Civic also welcomes six guest conductors to the podium to lead dynamic programs: Erina Yashima, a former CSO Solti Conducting Apprentice (Mahler's Symphony No. 5 on December 8 and 9); Alexander Shelley, who makes his Civic Orchestra podium debut (including a masterful orchestration of Ravel's Piano Trio on February 10, 2025); Carlos Miguel Prieto (Shostakovich's Symphony No. 7 on April 5 and 6, 2025), and Thomas Wilkins (Price's Symphony No. 3 and Dvořák's Symphony No. 8 on May 5, 2025).

Other Civic 2024/25 Season programs include a Civic Brass and Percussion concert with CSO trombonist Michael Mulcahy returning to the podium (March 5, 2025) and the Crain-Maling Foundation CSO Young Artists Competition Finals, led by Jerry Hou in his Civic podium debut (March 22, 2025).

Civic's 11th annual Bach Marathon is a day-long celebration that brings the music of J.S. Bach to communities across Chicago and culminates in a finale concert on November 18 at Fourth Presbyterian Church (126 E. Chestnut Street, Chicago), this year featuring four of the *Brandenburg* concertos and Bach's Orchestral Suite No. 3.

[Explore the Civic Orchestra of Chicago 2024/25 performance schedule and program listings.](#)

Civic at Symphony Center

Masur Conducts Ortiz & Schumann ([October 28](#))

Germany's Rhine Valley, the fairytale-like world of forested hillsides, medieval castles and the expansive Rhine River, is the backdrop for Wagner's legendary hero in Siegfried's Rhine Journey. Exploring the region alongside his wife Clara inspired Robert Schumann's *Rhenish* Symphony, which features country dances and evokes Cologne's majestic cathedral. Mexican composer Gabriela Ortiz pays tribute to Clara Schumann through a titular work celebrating the artist's genius, tenacity and influence on

Robert. The program will also be performed at Senn High School (5900 N. Glenwood Ave., Chicago) on Sunday, October 27, at 2:00 p.m.

Yashima Conducts Mahler 5 ([December 9](#))

Gustav Mahler once described his Fifth Symphony as a “foaming, roaring, raging sea of sound.” Led by Erina Yashima, a former CSO Solti Conducting Apprentice who made her Civic podium debut in 2019, the symphony charts an awe-inspiring journey, spanning a stormy funeral march, folk-inspired dances, a rapturous Adagietto — said to be Mahler’s love letter to his wife Alma — and a final hymn of triumph. The program will also be performed at Northside College Prep (5501 N. Kedzie Ave., Chicago) on Sunday, December 8, at 2:00 p.m.

Coleman, Montgomery & Rachmaninov 2 ([January 20, 2025](#))

After a deep crisis of confidence, Sergei Rachmaninov delivered one of classical music’s most triumphant returns, his Second Symphony, a masterpiece of crackling rhythms and gloriously romantic melodies. A bracing call to attention, Valerie Coleman’s *Fanfare for Uncommon Times* is “at once reflective and restless, uplifting and ominous” (*The New York Times*). Civic Principal Conductor Ken-David Masur leads the program that includes former Mead Composer-in-Residence Jessie Montgomery’s *Transfigure to Grace*, a stirring meditation on humanity’s continuing journey towards equality. The program will also be performed at South Shore Cultural Center (7059 S. South Shore Drive, Chicago) on Sunday, January 19, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.

Boulanger, Ravel & Debussy La mer ([February 10, 2025](#))

Composed under the gathering war clouds of 1914, Ravel’s Piano Trio melds Parisian refinement with the teeming rhythms of France’s Basque region. In his Civic Orchestra debut, Alexander Shelley conducts a brilliant orchestration of the trio, along with Debussy’s wondrous seascape *La mer* and Lili Boulanger’s exquisite ode to a spring morning.

Prieto Conducts Shostakovich 7 ([April 6, 2025](#))

As Leningrad came under siege in 1941, Dmitri Shostakovich retreated to an air raid shelter and — astoundingly — composed his Seventh Symphony. Marshaling a massive orchestra, he evokes the march rhythms of Nazi soldiers, citizens’ cries of anguish and, finally, a defiant victory hymn. Carlos Miguel Prieto, hailed for his “extraordinary ferocity and drive” (*The Guardian*), conducts this gripping score. The program will also be performed at Wentz Concert Hall at North Central College (171 E Chicago Ave, Naperville, IL) on Saturday, April 5, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.

Wilkins Conducts Price & Dvořák ([May 5, 2025](#))

Reaching across generations, Antonín Dvořák and Florence Price explore similar sound worlds to honor their homelands and ancestors. In his Eighth Symphony, Dvořák

evokes the Czech countryside — its birdsong, peasant dances, hymn tunes and sun-dappled melodies. Florence Price composed her Third Symphony amid the Black Chicago Renaissance, and the engaging work nods to American folk music and soaring spirituals.

Respighi, Tarrodi & Sibelius 2 ([June 2, 2025](#))

Across centuries, Italy's magnificent architecture and breathtaking landscapes have inspired countless artists. Led by Civic Principal Conductor Ken-David Masur, Respighi's *Fountains of Rome* paints a Technicolor portrait of the Eternal City's great fountains, while the seaside towns of the Liguria region are lovingly depicted in Swedish composer Andrea Tarrodi's work by the same name. It was in that same region, in the rugged village of Rapallo, that Sibelius conceived his heroic Second Symphony. The program will also be performed on Sunday, June 1, 2025, at a high school that will be announced later.

Special Events at Symphony Center

Civic Orchestra Brass & Percussion ([March 3, 2025](#))

Led by guest conductor and Chicago Symphony Orchestra trombonist Michael Mulcahy, musicians from the Civic Orchestra of Chicago perform a concert of works that showcase the virtuosity and range of brass and percussion instruments.

Civic in the Community

Civic at Senn High School: Masur Conducts Ortiz & Schumann ([October 27](#))

The Civic Orchestra performs a community concert at Senn High School (5900 N. Glenwood Ave., Chicago) led by Civic Principal Conductor Ken-David Masur. The program will also be performed at Symphony Center on Monday, October 28, at 7:30 p.m.

Bach Marathon Finale Concert ([November 18](#))

J.S. Bach's genius resonates joyfully in his *Brandenburg* concertos, which contain some of the boldest, most sumptuous instrumental writing of the Baroque era. Graceful, swirling melodies for woodwinds intertwine with exuberant string passages and dazzling harpsichord solos. The high spirits continue with Bach's regal Third Orchestral Suite, featuring the celebrated Air on the G String. Concert is presented at Fourth Presbyterian Church (126 E Chestnut St., Chicago).

Civic at Northside College Prep: Yashima Conducts Mahler 5 ([December 8](#))

The Civic Orchestra performs a community concert at Northside College Prep (5501 N. Kedzie Ave., Chicago) led by Erina Yashima, a former CSO Solti Conducting

Apprentice. The program features Mahler's Symphony No. 5 and will also be performed at Symphony Center on Monday, December 9, at 7:30 p.m.

Civic at South Shore Cultural Center: Coleman, Montgomery & Rachmaninov 2 ([January 19, 2025](#))

Making its 16th annual appearance at the historic South Shore Cultural Center (7059 S. South Shore Drive, Chicago), Civic and Principal Conductor Ken-David Masur share a program featuring Rachmaninov's Second Symphony that will also be performed at Symphony Center on Monday, January 20, 2025, at 7:30 p.m.

Civic at Wentz Concert Hall: Prieto Conducts Shostakovich 7 ([April 5, 2025](#))

The Civic Orchestra performs a free community concert led by Carlos Miguel Prieto at Wentz Concert Hall at North Central College (171 E. Chicago Ave., Naperville), featuring Shostakovich's Symphony No. 7. The program will be performed at Symphony Center on Sunday, April 6, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

Civic Community Concert: Respighi, Tarrodi & Sibelius 2 ([June 1, 2025](#))

The Civic Orchestra performs a community concert with a program featuring Respighi, Tarrodi and Sibelius' Second Symphony. The program will also be performed at Symphony Center on Monday, June 2, 2025, at 7:30 p.m. Location will be announced closer to the event.

Civic Fellows

Eleven members of the Civic Orchestra have been appointed as Civic Fellows for the 2024/25 Season and will participate in additional artistic and professional development activities. The Fellowship program, which launched in fall 2013 with eight Fellows, immerses the musicians in rigorous training that develops the participants' skills and experience in chamber music, teaching, community engagement and program planning. Fellow reflections on past events and information about upcoming events can be found at cso.org/civic.

Civic Fellows Chamber Music at Epiphany Center for the Arts ([January 12, 2025](#))

Be delighted and inspired by this contemporary chamber music concert curated and performed by the Civic Fellows, featuring musicians from the Chicago-based Black chamber music collective D-Composed. The Epiphany Center for the Arts is located at 201 S. Ashland Avenue, Chicago, IL.

Civic Fellows Chamber Music ([May 17, 2025](#))

Join the Civic Fellows for an evening of music programmed in response to a call for scores, and experience today's newest voices in composition. This program will take place in Buntrock Hall at Symphony Center.

Crain-Maling Foundation CSO Young Artists Competition

Founded in 1919, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Youth Auditions have featured extraordinary young soloists from across Illinois. Now known as the [Crain-Maling Foundation CSO Young Artists Competition](#), this concerto competition identifies one outstanding young performer to be featured in a CSO School and Family Concert the following season. This year's competition is open to pianists, and finalists will play one movement of a concerto on stage in Orchestra Hall, accompanied by the Civic Orchestra and conducted by Jerry Hou, in the final, public round on [Saturday, March 22, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.](#) This event is free and open to the public; tickets can be reserved two weeks prior to the event.

Community Chamber Series

Civic's annual series of free chamber concerts in neighborhood venues across Chicago will be announced in early 2025. Concerts take place at Indian Boundary Park, Zhou B Art Center, WNDR Museum, various area retirement communities and more.

Supporters

The 2024/25 Civic Orchestra season is generously sponsored by The Julian Family Foundation, which also provides major funding for the Civic Fellowship program.

Major support for the Civic Orchestra of Chicago also provided by Robert and Joanne Crown Income Charitable Fund; Leslie Fund, Inc.; Judy and Scott McCue; Leo and Catherine Miserendino; Barbara and Barre Seid Foundation; The George L. Shields Foundation, Inc.; the Maval Foundation, and an anonymous donor.

The Principal Conductor chair is endowed by a generous gift from Robert Kohl and Clark Pellett.

Ticket Details

Individual tickets for Civic Orchestra of Chicago concerts will go on sale two weeks prior to the concert date. Tickets for Civic performances in neighborhood venues are free, but tickets are required unless otherwise noted. Tickets will become available two weeks prior to each concert.

Contact Patron Services for personalized assistance online [cso.org/contact](https://www.cso.org/contact) or by calling [312-294-3000](tel:312-294-3000), Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. The walk-up Box Office at 220 S. Michigan Ave. is open Monday-Saturday 12 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Artists, programs and prices are subject to change.

For more information about the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, visit [cso.org/civic](https://www.cso.org/civic).

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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 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 [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 the 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. 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](https://www.cso.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.