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MEAD COMPOSER-CURATOR DANIEL BERNARD ROUMAIN HOSTS OPENING PROGRAM OF CSO MUSICNOW: “VOICES OF MIGRATION & INNOVATION”

CHICAGO — The acclaimed contemporary music series [CSO MusicNOW](#) continues in the 2024/25 season with a November 24 program hosted by Mead Composer-Curator Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR) titled “Voices of Migration & Innovation.” The program features the world premiere of *Uncertainty, Our Country*, a CSO MusicNOW-commissioned work by DBR, as well as his String Quartet No. 5 (*Parks*) and *Voodoo Violin Concerto No. 1*, in which he is the featured soloist. Completing the program are works by Allison Loggins-Hull and Brittany J. Green. The performance is followed by an opportunity to mix and mingle with the artists and fellow concertgoers, hosted by the CSO’s African American Network (AAN). CSO MusicNOW continues in the spring with Mead Composer-Curator Jimmy López hosting a diverse program featuring his compositions and works by composers Pierre Boulez, Quinn Mason and Adam Schoenberg ([March 23](#)).

Chicago native Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR) has been praised for his “inventive and energetic music” by *The New York Times*, which declared him to be “about as omnivorous as a contemporary artist gets.” DBR has worked with artists from Philip Glass to Bill T. Jones to Lady Gaga, as well as institutions including the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Kennedy Center, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Sydney Opera House. In collaboration with Anna Deavere Smith, his opera *The Walkers* premiered at Lyric Opera of Chicago in 2023, the first of three works in the new multi-composer opera trilogy, *Proximity*. DBR’s CSO MusicNOW program opens with his String Quartet No. 5 (*Parks*), written in 2005 and dedicated to the memory of civil rights pioneer Rosa Parks and to courageous women everywhere. The program continues with Brittany J. Green’s 2022 work *shift.unravel.BREAK*, for clarinet, violin, cello and piano, which takes on the form of its title as the musical material comes together out of silence and then shifts around the ensemble. *Homeland*, written by Allison Loggins-Hull shortly after the

devastation of Hurricane Maria surged through Puerto Rico in 2017, explores the concept of home during a crisis. Composed for solo flute, *Homeland* features CSO Principal Flute Stefán Ragnar Höskuldsson as soloist.

The program concludes with two works by DBR: the world premiere of *Uncertainty, Our Country*, a CSO MusicNOW commission written for violin, viola, cello and piano; and his *Voodoo Violin Concerto No. 1*, with Roumain as the featured violinist on both works. Drawing on influences from jazz, blues and folk music, the concerto was composed in 2002 for solo violin and chamber ensemble. The performance also features musicians from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and conductor Kedrick Armstrong, named one of “22 for ’22: Composers and performers to watch” by *The Washington Post* and the new Music Director of the Oakland Symphony. Roumain comments:

“I am looking forward to sharing the ‘Voices of Migration & Innovation’ program to open the 2024/25 CSO MusicNOW. It is an honor to return to Chicago and collaborate with musicians of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra on this program that includes my music and music of fellow composers I admire. I hope audiences will remain open to the exploration and innovation that is happening in new music today.”

DBR’s performance is presented in collaboration with the [CSO African American Network \(AAN\)](#), which connects the CSO with Chicago’s diverse communities by highlighting Black composers, conductors and artists. A liaison and volunteer group of active members established in 2016, the CSO AAN hosts a post-concert reception with DBR and the CSO MusicNOW artists following the November 24 performance.

About Daniel Bernard Roumain

Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR) is a Black, Haitian American composer who sees composing as collaboration with artists, organizations and communities within the framing and framing of ideas. He is a prolific and endlessly collaborative composer, performer, educator and social entrepreneur.

Known for his signature violin sounds infused with myriad electronic and African American music influences, Roumain takes his genre-bending music beyond the proscenium. He is a composer of solo, chamber, orchestral and operatic works, and has composed an array of film, theater and dance scores. He has composed music for the acclaimed film *Ailey* (Sundance official selection); was the first Music Director and Principal Composer with the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company; has released and appeared on 30 album recordings; and has published over 300 works. He has appeared on CBS, ESPN, FOX, NBC, NPR and PBS; and has presented at and collaborated with the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Kennedy Center, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Sydney Opera House. He was Artist-in-Residence and Creative Chair at the Flynn in Burlington,

Vermont. Currently, he is the first Artistic Ambassador with FirstWorks; the first Artist Activist-in-Residence at Longy School of Music; and the first Resident Artistic Catalyst with the New Jersey Symphony.

Roumain is an Atlantic Center Master Artist, a Creative Capital Grantee and a Hermitage Artist Retreat Fellow. He has won the American Academy in Rome's Goddard Lieberman Fellowship; a Civitella Ranieri Music Fellowship Award; two regional Emmy Awards for *The New Look of Classical Music: Boston Pops Orchestra* and *Art is Essential: New Jersey Symphony*; National Sawdust's Disruptor Award; and the Sphinx Organization's Arthur L. Johnson Award. He has been featured as a keynote speaker at universities, colleges, conservatories and technology conferences, and was the first ASU Gammage Residency Artist. He has lectured at Yale and Princeton University and was a Roth Distinguished Visiting Scholar at Dartmouth College. He served as a board member for the Association of Performing Arts Professionals (Vice Chair), currently serves on the League of American Orchestras, and is a voting member for the Recording Academy Grammy awards.

A student of William Albright, Leslie Bassett and William Bolcom, Roumain graduated from Vanderbilt University and earned his doctorate in music composition from the University of Michigan. He is currently a tenured Associate and Institute Professor at Arizona State University Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts.

Patron Information

Subscriptions for the 2024/25 CSO MusicNOW series at Symphony Center are now available for \$45. Patron services representatives are available to assist with ticket packages by web chat at [cso.org](https://www.cso.org), by calling [312-294-3000](tel:312-294-3000) (Monday–Saturday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.), or by emailing patronservices@cso.org.

All artists and programs are subject to change.

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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](#) 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. 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.