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TIMOTHY HIGGINS APPOINTED PRINCIPAL TROMBONE OF THE CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CHICAGO – The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association (CSOA) announces the appointment of Timothy Higgins as principal trombone of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO). He officially steps into the position for the CSO's first program of the 2025/26 Season on [September 18 and 19](#). Higgins will hold the Lisa and Paul Wiggin Principal Trombone Chair and succeeds Jay Friedman, who retires in September after 63 seasons as one of the longest serving musicians in the CSO's history. Higgins won the final audition for principal trombone in April 2025 and is the second CSO musician to be appointed by [Zell Music Director Designate Klaus Mäkelä](#). He appeared as guest principal trombone with Mäkelä and the CSO for memorable performances of Mahler's Third Symphony in April and with Jaap van Zweden for spring performances of Mahler's Sixth and Seventh symphonies in Chicago, on the Orchestra's 2025 European Tour and the final two weeks at the Ravinia Festival this summer as guest principal trombone.

Prior to his appointment to the CSO, Higgins served as principal trombone of the San Francisco Symphony which he joined in 2008 following his appointment by Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas. Before joining the San Francisco Symphony, he was previously the acting second trombonist with the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, D.C. In addition to the CSO, Higgins has also performed with major U.S. orchestras including the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Milwaukee Symphony and Baltimore Symphony, as well as Washington National Opera, Chicago's Music of the Baroque, the Sun Valley Music Festival, the Aspen Music Festival and Grand Teton Music Festival.

In addition to an active orchestra career, Higgins is a highly regarded composer and arranger. He was the sole arranger of the National Brass Ensemble's *Gabrieli* recording. In November 2021, Higgins composed and performed as soloist in the premiere of his Concerto for Trombone with Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony. Additional arrangements and compositions by Higgins have been programmed by the San Francisco Symphony, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Cleveland Orchestra, Detroit Symphony, Kansas City Symphony, Steamboat Springs Strings Festival and numerous university brass ensembles. His compositions have been commissioned by the San Francisco Symphony, Detroit Symphony, American Brass Quintet, international tuba soloist Sergio Carolino and Music City Brass Ensemble. Higgins was the composer-in-residence at

Music Academy of the West in 2018, debuting a piece for chamber ensemble and voice featuring renowned American soprano Deborah Voigt. His arrangements and original compositions are available through his publishing company, [415Music](#), established in 2014. He released a solo CD, [Stage Left](#), which features his own compositions in 2013. Recent albums include two self-produced recordings from 2020 in his [Underground](#) series.

A respected educator, Higgins has served on the faculty at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music and the Pokorny Low Brass Seminar at Northern Illinois University. He has also been part of the brass faculty at the Aspen Music Festival and Pacific Music Festival. Higgins has led masterclasses in Australia, China, Canada, Japan and North America, including classes at the Royal Conservatory in Toronto, New World Symphony, Vanderbilt University, Manhattan School of Music and Juilliard School of Music.

Originally from Houston, Texas, Higgins came to the Chicago area to attend Northwestern University, where he received a bachelor's degree in music performance and studied with CSO Trombone Michael Mulcahy. His other principal teachers were Michael Warny (Houston Grand Opera) and Royce Landon (Des Moines, Iowa). In 2005, Higgins won the Robert Marsteller Solo trombone competition, as well as the International Trombone Association (ITA) Trombone Quartet competition with his group CT3. While attending the Tanglewood Music Center, Higgins was awarded the Grace B. Upton Award for Outstanding Fellow. Timothy Higgins is a Bach Artist and an Ultimate Brass Artist.

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

The CSO's principal trombone chair is endowed by Lisa and Paul Wiggin.

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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](#) 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.