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## **CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA MUSICIANS AND CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ASSOCIATION RATIFY NEW THREE-YEAR AGREEMENT**

CHICAGO — The musicians of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) — members of the Chicago Federation of Musicians (CFM), Local 10-208 of the American Federation of Musicians — and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association (CSOA) announce the ratification of a new three-year collective bargaining agreement, effective September 2023 through September 2026.

The members of the CSO and the CSOA Board of Trustees voted today to accept the terms of the new contract. Under the terms of the newly ratified agreement, CSO musicians' annual salary will increase by 3% in each of the three years of the contract. All healthcare, insurance and retirement benefits will be retained. A number of changes to the agreement were made that improve working conditions for the musicians, and create revenue opportunities, cost reductions and managerial efficiencies for the CSOA and Ravinia Festival.

“The Chicago Symphony Orchestra remains a cultural beacon in the world today. Known for its extraordinary artistry, the CSO is an important ambassador for the arts,” said CSOA Board Chair Mary Louise Gorno. “The Trustees recognize and celebrate the incredible musical gifts shared by the musicians of the CSO with our audiences in

Chicago, in the U.S. and around the world. On behalf of the Board, we express gratitude to the teams who worked collaboratively and productively to secure this new agreement that provides financial sustainability for the organization while retaining the highest artistic standards.”

“This is an important moment for the CSOA and the members of the CSO,” said CSOA President Jeff Alexander. The atmosphere of cooperation and partnership that was sustained through these negotiations underlines a foundation that has been strengthened in recent years and recognized priorities that will not only benefit the orchestra and the organization, but the artform and community we serve. I look forward to continuing to work together with the Members of the Orchestra and the Chicago Federation of Musicians to advance the legacy of this great Orchestra.”

“The Musicians of the CSO are very pleased that an agreement for a new contract with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association has been reached,” said James Smelser, Chair of the CSO Members’ Committee. “We are appreciative of the Trustees and the Administration and their efforts, and this agreement demonstrates the strong support by the Board for the Members of the Orchestra. Their commitment to the Orchestra allows us to continue the tradition of sharing great orchestral music at the highest level with our audiences in Chicago and across the world.”

“During the course of these negotiations, the CFM and CSOA presented thoughtful and reasoned arguments in a respectful manner, emerging with a contract that strengthens the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Association as well,” added CFM President BJ Levy. “The Union is pleased with the outcome and celebrates the extraordinary talent and commitment of the musicians of this historic cultural institution and crown jewel of the orchestral world.”

Negotiations between the CSOA and the CSO Musicians’ Negotiating Committee began in June 2023 and continued through September 17. A tentative agreement for a new contract was reached on the evening of September 17 before the contract was to expire at midnight. Both parties ratified the new agreement on Tuesday, September 19, 2023.

Throughout the contract discussions, the CSO Musicians’ Negotiating Committee was represented by the Chicago Federation of Musicians Local 10-208, President BJ Levy, Vice President John Floeter and legal counsel Robert Bloch of Dowd, Bloch, Bennett, Cervone, Auerbach & Yokich LLP. The CSOA was represented by legal counsel Rachel Cowen of McDermott, Will & Emery.

The parties would like to express their gratitude to their Negotiating Committee members — for the CSO, musicians James Smelser, Horn, Chair of the Orchestra Members’ Committee; William Buchman, Assistant Principal Bassoon, Vice-Chair of the

Orchestra Members' Committee; Cynthia Yeh, Principal Percussion; Emma Gerstein, Flute; Miles Maner, Bassoon; Kenneth Olsen, Assistant Principal Cello; and David Sanders, Cello — and for the CSOA, President Jeff Alexander, Chief Financial Officer Stacie Frank, Vice President for Orchestra and Building Operations Vanessa Moss, Director of Orchestra Personnel John Deverman; Director of Artistic Planning & Special Projects Monica Wentz and Director, Financial Planning & Analysis Kerri Gravlin.

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