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**Press Contact:**  
[Hannah Sundwall](#)  
[312-294-3083](#)

## **OCTOBER PROGRAMMING AT SYMPHONY CENTER AND IN THE COMMUNITY**

CHICAGO — October is a month of diverse programming presented by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association (CSOA), highlighted by the return of Zell Music Director Designate Klaus Mäkelä and Music Director Emeritus for Life Riccardo Muti. The classical schedule features a mix of orchestral masterpieces and unique collaborations. Mäkelä leads an all-Berlioz program featuring *Symphonie fantastique* and the symphonic tone poem *Harold in Italy* with violist Antoine Tamestit as soloist. Muti returns to conduct Dvořák's *New World* Symphony and Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler*. A special semi-staged production, produced in association with The Goodman, brings Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale* to life. The month also includes performances by CSO Piccolo Jennifer Gunn in Thea Musgrave's *Piccolo Play* and Augustin Hadelich in Dvořák's Violin Concerto. Hadelich also opens the CSO at Wheaton series with a performance at Wheaton College's Edman Memorial Chapel on October 10.

In October, the Symphony Center Presents (SCP) Piano series opens with a debut appearance by Yunchan Lim, the youngest-ever winner of the Van Cliburn Competition, performing Bach's iconic *Goldberg* Variations. The SCP Jazz series presents two distinct evenings: a rare duo performance by bassist Christian McBride and pianist Brad Mehldau, and a return appearance by jazz legend Herbie Hancock in his 15th Orchestra Hall performance. Also featured are performances by the classical music duo TwoSet Violin and mandolin virtuoso and founding member of Punch Brothers Chris Thile, whose program spans classical, folk, and improvisational styles.

The Civic Orchestra of Chicago officially opens its 107th season on October 27 at Symphony Center, led by Principal Conductor Ken-David Masur. The program features one of the most recognizable works in the repertoire, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, alongside Iman Habibi's *Every Tree Speaks* and Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphosis*. In keeping with its community-focused mission, the orchestra presents a free community concert of the same program at Senn High School on October 26, as

well as a Notes for Peace event on October 18, which uses therapeutic benefits of music to support families who have lost loved ones to gun violence.

Tickets and more information are available at [cso.org](https://www.cso.org).

[Explore](#) a chronological list of October 2025 concert programs.

## **Chicago Symphony Orchestra**

### **Piccolo Play & Adagio for Strings ([October 3-4](#))**

Pergolesi's sacred masterpiece, the *Stabat Mater*, is filled with gorgeous, spine-tingling music that explores the nature of grief, hope and healing. These emotions also course through Barber's sublime Adagio for Strings and Carlos Simon's *Fate Now Conquers*, a high-spirited tribute to Beethoven. CSO Piccolo Jennifer Gunn solos as the mercurial protagonist in Thea Musgrave's *Piccolo Play*.

### **Hadelich, Dvořák & Brahms 2 ([October 9-11](#))**

Dvořák expertly weaves the heartbeat of Czech folk dances into his soulful Violin Concerto. It's a perfect vehicle for Augustin Hadelich, who "conveys the music's rousing energy, while somehow maintaining a breezy lilt" (*The New York Times*). Framing the program are Kodály's whirlwind portrait of Hungarian village life and the rustic warmth of Brahms' Second Symphony.

The program is also offered on [Friday, October 10](#) at Wheaton College's Edman Memorial Chapel (401 E. Franklin St., Wheaton) and opens the 2025/26 Season of the CSO at Wheaton concert series.

### **Mäkelä Conducts *Symphonie fantastique* ([October 16-18](#))**

Love, witchcraft, murder — it's all packed into *Symphonie fantastique*, Berlioz's thriller about a lovesick artist obsessed with a young actress. Zell Music Director Designate Klaus Mäkelä leads this showpiece in all its psychedelic glory. There's more drama in *Harold in Italy*, Berlioz's Byronic tone poem featuring violist Antoine Tamestit's "ferocity and panache" (*BBC Music Magazine*).

### **The Soldier's Tale ([October 23-25](#))**

Step into Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale*, a semi-staged collaboration with The Goodman. Costumes, props and evocative lighting help bring to life the Faustian fable of a soldier-fiddler who makes a pact with the devil. Framed by the composer's Septet and Octet, the program blends theatrical storytelling with dazzling ensemble playing.

Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale* is produced in association with The Goodman.

**Muti Conducts Strauss, Hindemith & Dvořák 9 ([October 30-November 4](#))**

Music Director Emeritus for Life Riccardo Muti returns with an all-time orchestral favorite: Dvořák's *New World* Symphony. Its glorious melodies capture the folk songs and spirituals the composer heard in America, dosed with a heartfelt longing for his Czech homeland. Composed in 1939, Hindemith's majestic *Mathis der Maler* portrays an eminent Renaissance artist's struggles against political repression.

The [November 4](#) performance takes place at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign.

**CSO Chamber Music**

**CSO Chamber Music at the University of Chicago ([October 12](#))**

A beloved highlight of the season, this performance features Mozart's stormy Serenade for Winds in C Minor and Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* Suite, capturing the most iconic moments of the timeless tragedy, all brought to life by a Chicago Symphony Orchestra wind ensemble.

This concert takes place at Mandel Hall (1131 E. 57th St., Chicago) at University of Chicago.

**CSO Chamber Music at Driehaus Museum ([October 21](#))**

Experience a special evening of music in celebration of *Tiffany Lamps: Beyond the Shade* featuring musicians from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. The program begins with a brief introduction to the exhibition by guest curator, Alexandra M. Ruggiero, and is followed with works by Mel Bonis, Paul Schoenfield, and Ludwig van Beethoven.

The ticket includes admission to the Museum. The Museum will be open for program guests at 5 p.m. prior to the event or you can visit at a later date during public hours with your ticket.

This concert takes place at Driehaus Museum (50 E. Erie St., Chicago).

**Symphony Center Presents**

**TwoSet Violin ([October 14](#))**

Celebrate the joy of music with TwoSet Violin, the classical music duo that has captured the hearts of millions worldwide. Known for their hilarious sketches, viral videos and stunning musicianship, Brett Yang and Eddy Chen bring their unique blend of humor

and artistry to Symphony Center. As *The Strad* writes, “their love of classical music imbues every moment and stokes that love in the audience in a very different way from a typical concert.”

### **An Evening with Chris Thile ([October 24](#))**

MacArthur Fellow and Grammy Award-winning mandolinist, singer, songwriter and composer Chris Thile, hailed as “an all-round musician” (*The Guardian*), brings his genre-spanning artistry to Symphony Center. This wide-ranging program features selections from his acclaimed solo recordings of Bach’s Sonatas and Partitas — including the upcoming second volume out this fall — alongside his signature blend of classical, folk and improvisational brilliance.

### **Symphony Center Presents Piano**

#### **Yunchan Lim ([October 19](#))**

Yunchan Lim, who at 18 became the youngest-ever winner of the Van Cliburn Competition, climbs the summit of Baroque keyboard music in Bach’s *Goldberg* Variations. A miraculous series of 30 transformations on a single theme — ranging from the contemplative to the euphoric — the Goldbergs are a showcase for Bach’s prismatic range and imagination.

### **Symphony Center Presents Jazz**

#### **Christian McBride & Brad Mehldau ([October 10](#))**

Christian McBride and Brad Mehldau — two music icons with a long history of collaboration — bring the intimacy and charm of a jazz club to Symphony Center. In a rare bass and piano duo performance, these Chicago favorites showcase their extraordinary musical rapport and captivating interplay. *The New York Times* hails Mehldau’s “elegant inventiveness,” while *DownBeat* praises McBride’s “unmistakable virtuosity.” The combination promises an evening of nuanced musical conversation.

#### **Herbie Hancock ([October 26](#))**

After Herbie Hancock’s 2024 performance at Symphony Center, the *Chicago Tribune* hailed him as “one of music’s most catalytic forces,” seamlessly navigating his vast catalog with playfully electric energy and charm. In his 85th year and 15th appearance on the stage of Orchestra Hall, he remains the epitome of innovation — constantly evolving his sound and discovering new ways to communicate through music.

## **Civic Orchestra of Chicago**

### **Notes for Peace ([October 18](#))**

Launched in March 2018 in partnership with Purpose Over Pain, the Notes for Peace program uses the therapeutic benefits of music to support families who have lost loved ones to gun violence.

With guidance from the Civic Fellows, guest teaching artists from the U.K.-based Irene Taylor Trust and professional vocalists, parents from Purpose Over Pain compose, perform live and professionally record their music, which is then featured alongside family photos and lyrics on [notesforpeace.org](https://notesforpeace.org). This concert takes place in Buntrock Hall at Symphony Center.

### **Civic Plays Beethoven 5 at Senn High School ([October 26](#))**

The Civic Orchestra performs a community concert at Nicholas Senn High School (5900 N. Glenwood Ave., Chicago) led by Civic Principal Conductor Ken-David Masur.

### **Civic Plays Beethoven 5 ([October 27](#))**

Beethoven's Fifth Symphony encompasses one of the most gripping journeys in all orchestral music, from its fateful four-note opening to the triumphant coda. Ken-David Masur opens the program with Iman Habibi's *Every Tree Speaks* — a powerful, Beethoven-inspired response to the current environmental crisis — and Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphosis*, which brings the 19th-century sounds of Weber into the modern age.

## **Donor Event**

### **Fall in Love with Music ([October 17](#))**

The League of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association presents its signature Fall in Love with Music event on Friday, October 17 at the Union League Club of Chicago (65 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago). Attendees will enjoy a luncheon and program featuring Zell Music Director Designate Klaus Mäkelä and violist Antoine Tamestit. Following the program, attendees will hear a conversation with Mäkelä and Tamestit, moderated by CSOA President Jeff Alexander. Tickets are \$250 per person, and a variety of sponsorships are available. Proceeds from this event benefit the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association's artistic, educational and community engagement programs.

## **Parking and Transit Options**

Exclusive parking rates are available through Millennium Garages, the Preferred Parking Partner for Symphony Center. The closest parking garage is the Grant Park South Garage, located at 325 S. Michigan Ave. Valet parking is available for select

performances at Symphony Center's 67 E. Adams St. entrance. A round-trip North Shore Shuttle service is available for Friday matinees. Visit [cso.org/parking](https://www.cso.org/parking) for more parking and transit options.

### **Patron Information**

Contact Patron Services for personalized assistance online at [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.

All artists and programs are subject to change.

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association acknowledges support from the Illinois Arts Council.

CSO at Wheaton performances are generously sponsored by the JCS Arts, Health and Education Fund of DuPage Foundation.

Support for the CSO at Wheaton series is provided by Megan and Steve Shebik.

The appearance of Augustin Hadelich is made possible by the Grainger Fund for Excellence.

The Christian McBride & Brad Mehldau concert has been made possible through a generous grant from Dan J. Epstein, Judy Guitelman, and the Dan J. Epstein Family Foundation.

Chicago Jazz, *DownBeat* Magazine and WDCB 90.9FM Jazz are Media Partners for the Christian McBride & Brad Mehldau concert.

Bank of America is the Maestro Residency Presenter.

The Mäkelä Conducts Symphonie fantastique concerts are generously sponsored by Zell Family Foundation.

Newsradio 105.9 WBBM is a Media Partner for the Mäkelä Conducts Symphonie fantastique concerts.

The 2025/26 Civic Orchestra season is generously sponsored by Lori Julian for the Julian Family Foundation, which also provides major funding for the Civic Fellowship program.

Support for the 2025/26 Notes for Peace program is provided by Megan and Steve Shebik, Theodore and Elisabeth Wachs and Lisa and Paul Wiggin.

The Yunchan Lin performance is generously sponsored by the Randy L. and Melvin R. Berlin Family Fund for the Canon.

The Soldier's Tale concerts are generously sponsored by United Airlines.

Muti Conducts Strauss, Hindemith and Dvořák 9 is made possible by the Juli Plant Grainger Fund for Excellence.

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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](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 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. 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](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.