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

CHICAGO — May programming presented by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association (CSOA) at Symphony Center and in community venues features a wide variety of events, including Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) concerts with renowned guest conductors and soloists. CSO concert highlights include several return podium appearances. CSO Zell Music Director Designate Klaus Mäkelä concludes a two-week residency with a program that features 2024/25 CSO Artist-in-Residence Daniil Trifonov as soloist in Brahms' Second Piano Concerto (May 1-4). Guest conductor Jaap van Zweden returns to conduct Mahler's Symphony No. 6 in Chicago on May 8 and 9 before leading the CSO in Mahler's Symphonies Nos. 6 & 7 on a European Tour that begins with the 2025 Mahler Festival in Amsterdam. Following the tour, conductor James Gaffigan leads a program that features the CSO's first performances of Dvořák's *American Suite* and soprano Janai Brugger as soloist in songs by Florence Price and songs from Gershwin's opera *Porgy and Bess* (May 31).

Additional highlights include programs across a variety of concert series. The CSO for Kids Family Matinee and Once Upon a Symphony series continue with a Community Pride program featuring Crain-Maling Foundation CSO Young Artists Competition winner Jaden Teague-Núñez as steelpan drum soloist (May 3) and the South African folktale Abiyoyo (May 10). CSO at the Movies presents the 1989 film *Field of Dreams* on the big screen with the CSO performing James Horner's score, which has recently been adapted for live performance.

Symphony Center Presents (SCP) concerts in May feature a variety of highlights, from a Chamber Music series program featuring renowned violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter, pianist Yefim Bronfman and cellist Pablo Ferrández (May 7) to an evening with Colombian-born

jazz harpist Edmar Castañeda and award-winning pianist, vocalist and Brazilian superstar Eliane Elias (May 9). The second installment of the popular set of films, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*™ is back for three performances on the big screen with John William's iconic score performed live with orchestra (May 16-17). May's SCP Piano series welcomes Evgeny Kissin for a program of works by Bach, Chopin and Shostakovich (May 11).

Conductor and educator Thomas Wilkins returns to the podium to lead the Civic Orchestra of Chicago (May 5). Following a call for scores, Fellows of the Civic Orchestra present a program of contemporary chamber music (May 17).

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

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

## **Chicago Symphony Orchestra**

### **Mäkelä & Trifonov ([May 1-4](#))**

Zell Music Director Designate Klaus Mäkelä leads a program with 2024/25 CSO Artist-in-Residence Daniil Trifonov as soloist in Brahms' Second Piano Concerto, followed by Boulez's *Initiale* for Brass Septet. Dvořák's Symphony No. 7, a celebration of the composer's Czech heritage and musical influences, completes the program.

Trifonov participates in a CD signing following the concert on Thursday, May 1. The signing will take place in the Rotunda, with merchandise available in the Symphony Store and the Orchestra Hall outer lobby throughout the evening.

### **Mahler 6 with Jaap van Zweden ([May 8-9](#))**

Music Director of the Seoul Philharmonic and Music Director-Designate of the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France Jaap van Zweden leads Mahler's Symphony No. 6 — a Chicago preview preceding the CSO's appearance as the only North American orchestra at the [2025 Mahler Festival](#) at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, part of its [May European Tour](#) (May 14-24).

### **An American Suite ([May 31](#))**

General Music Director of Komische Oper Berlin and Music Director of the Palau de les Arts Reina Sofía in Valencia, American conductor James Gaffigan leads a program of American impressions. Opening the program are the Orchestra's first performances of Czech composer Antonín Dvořák's *American Suite* followed by two orchestral songs by Florence Price — *My Dream* and *Beside the Sea* — set to poems by Langston Hughes, with soprano Janai Brugger as soloist. Works by Bernstein and Gershwin round out the program, including Three Dance Episodes from *On the Town*, "Summertime" and "My

Man's Gone Now" from *Porgy and Bess* sung by Brugger, *An American in Paris* and Overture to *Candide*.

## **CSO for Kids**

### **Community Pride** ([May 3](#))

Principal Conductor of the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, Artistic Advisor of Education and Community Engagement for the Boston Symphony and Indiana University's Henry A. Upper Chair of Orchestral Conducting Thomas Wilkins leads members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in a program highlighting how individuals work together toward a common goal in both our communities and an orchestra. Jaden Teague-Núñez, winner of the 2024 Crain-Maling Foundation CSO Young Artists Competition, performs as soloist in his father Liam Teague's steelpan concerto, *A Visit to Hell*. The program features a wide variety of composers, including works by Prokofiev, Fučík, Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky, Grieg, Brahms and Smetana.

### **Once Upon a Symphony: Abiyoyo** ([May 10](#))

Produced and presented in partnership with Chicago Children's Theatre, *Once Upon a Symphony* combines vibrant music played by members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra with enchanting visuals and storytelling, featuring narrators Gabriel Levi and Shelby Marie Edwards, for a playful concert experience. Based on singer-songwriter Pete Seeger's story adaptation of the South African folktale *Abiyoyo*, this presentation combines musical selections with the story of a boy and his magician father, banished from their town for making mischief, who are later welcomed back after finding a way to make a giant named *Abiyoyo* disappear.

## **CSO at the Movies**

### **Field of Dreams in Concert** ([May 30-June 1](#))

Conductor Nicholas Buc leads the CSO in James Horner's score — adapted for the first time for live performance — to the 1989 heartfelt classic film *Field of Dreams*, which was nominated for three Academy Awards including Best Picture and Best Original Score. Haunted by a mysterious voice he can't ignore, Iowa farmer Ray Kinsella (Kevin Costner) transforms his cornfield into a baseball field where dreams can come true, and he can finally come to terms with his own unsettled past.

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## **Symphony Center Presents Chamber Music**

### **Mutter, Bronfman & Ferrández ([May 7](#))**

Four-time Grammy Award-winning violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter, Avery Fisher Prize recipient and pianist Yefim Bronfman and International Tchaikovsky Competition-winning cellist Pablo Ferrández and come together for a powerhouse program, featuring Beethoven's Piano Trio in B-flat Major (*Archduke*) and Tchaikovsky's Piano Trio in A Minor.

## **Symphony Center Presents Jazz**

### **Eliane Elias / Edmar Castañeda: Family ([May 9](#))**

Brazilian jazz pianist, singer, composer and arranger Eliane Elias and her band, featuring guitarist Leandro Pellegrino, bassist Marc Johnson and drummer Rafael Barata, concludes the evening with a virtuosic blend of classic jazz and Afro-Latin rhythms like samba and bossa nova, including works from her latest album, *Time and Again*.

Colombian-born jazz harpist Edmar Castañeda — who can be heard in Disney's film *Encanto* — opens the evening, performing original compositions and interpretations of traditional Colombian songs from his album *Family*, featuring saxophonist Birsa Chatterjee, drummer Pablo Bencid and vocalist Andrea Tierra.

## **Symphony Center Presents**

### **Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets™ in Concert ([May 16-18](#))**

Conductor Ron Spigelman leads Orchestra 220 in John Williams' score to *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*™ alongside a high-definition screening of the film. The second film in this magical world features Harry's second year at Hogwarts™ School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, where cars fly, trees fight back and mysterious creatures lie waiting in the depths.

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## **Symphony Center Presents Piano**

### **Evgeny Kissin ([May 11](#))**

Grammy Award-winning pianist Evgeny Kissin navigates a program ranging from Bach's Partita No. 2 in C Minor to Romantic-era classics by Chopin and a set of Shostakovich selections, including the composer's Sonata No. 2 in B Minor and Prelude and Fugue Nos. 15 and 24.

## **Civic Orchestra of Chicago**

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

Principal Conductor of the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, Artistic Advisor of Education and Community Engagement for the Boston Symphony and Indiana University's Henry A. Upper Chair of Orchestral Conducting Thomas Wilkins leads the Civic Orchestra in a program of works by composers who explore similar sound worlds to honor their homelands and ancestors. Composed during the Black Chicago Renaissance, Florence Price's Symphony No. 3 opens the program, incorporating American folk music and spirituals, whereas birdsong, peasant dances and hymns illustrate Czech country life in Dvořák's Symphony No. 8.

Tickets for this concert are pay what you wish, starting at \$5.

### **Civic Fellows Chamber Music ([May 17](#))**

Join [Fellows of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago](#) as they present a variety of contemporary chamber music works programmed in response to a call for scores. Repertoire includes works by today's newest voices in composition, including Navarro's *Belén: Un canto sagrado a mis ancestros*, Link's *Alpenglow*, Martin's *Ladders Cross the Blue Sky in a Wheel of Fire*, Creager's *Rot Town*, Levin's *Videogame Vespers* and Schultz's *Creation*.

This free event takes place in Buntrock Hall. Tickets are required for entry and become available May 2.

## **Food and Beverage**

The Thomas Club, located on the ninth floor of Symphony Center with sweeping views of Lake Michigan, offers a prix fixe menu featuring traditional American fare for a seamless preconcert dining experience. View menus, make reservations and learn more about dining at the Thomas Club at [cso.org/dining](https://www.cso.org/dining).

## **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 located at Symphony Center's 67 E. Adams St. entrance, and is available for select performances. 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. The walk-up Box Office at 220 S. Michigan Ave. is open Monday-Saturday 12 p.m. – 6 p.m.

All artists and programs are subject to change.

United Airlines is the Official Airline of the CSO.

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The Artist in Residence at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra is made possible through a generous gift from James and Brenda Grusecki.

The Mäkelä & Trifonov concerts are generously sponsored by Zell Family Foundation.

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

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The Wilkins Conducts Price & Dvořák project is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.

The Mutter, Bronfman & Ferrández performance is generously sponsored by the Randy L. and Melvin R. Berlin Family Fund for the Canon.

The Mahler 6 with Jaap van Zweden performances are sponsored by the Bonnie Ann Barber Endowment Fund, which recognizes the importance of the CSO to Chicago and aims to preserve and support the CSO's legacy for future generations.

Funding for educational programs during the 2024/25 Season of SCP Jazz has been generously provided by Dan J. Epstein, Judith Guitelman and the Dan J. Epstein Family Foundation.

The Evgeny Kissin performance is made possible with the generous sponsorship of Josef and Margot Lakonishok.

The CSO at the Movies series is generously sponsored by Megan and Steve Shebik.

The appearance of Janai Brugger is made possible by the 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 May 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.