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## **CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND RICCARDO MUTI RELEASE CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN COMPOSERS ON CSO RESOUND LABEL**

### **New Recording Features Works by Philip Glass, Jessie Montgomery and Max Raimi, Including Two CSO Commissions**

CHICAGO – On June 16, 2023, the [Chicago Symphony Orchestra \(CSO\)](#) will release *Contemporary American Composers*, its 12th recording with Music Director Riccardo Muti on the CSO Resound Label, for digital download and streaming through platforms including Apple Music, Amazon Music and Spotify, as well as [symphonystore.com](#). The physical CD release, which will be available at retailers worldwide in summer 2023, can be pre-ordered now at online retail outlets, including [symphonystore.com](#). The new release features performances recorded live in Orchestra Hall and includes three recent works with two CSO commissions from Mead Composer-in-Residence Jessie Montgomery and Max Raimi, as well as the CSO's first performance of the Symphony No. 11 by Philip Glass. The recording opens with Montgomery's *Hymn to Everyone* from 2022, continues with Raimi's song cycle *Three Lisel Mueller Settings* and concludes with the Glass symphony. *Contemporary American Composers* will be available in Spatial Audio with Dolby Atmos® format.

The release of *Contemporary American Composers* on [CSO Resound](#) – the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's Grammy Award-winning independent record label – continues a tradition of introducing new orchestral works that has long been a core part of the orchestra's mission. Muti himself has regularly programmed and performed music by a wide range of contemporary composers across his 13 seasons of artistic collaboration with the Orchestra, including three live recordings released on CSO Resound: the 2012 premieres of Mason Bates' *Alternative Energy* and Anna Clyne's *Night Ferry*, released together in 2014; and the Grammy-nominated 2016 world premiere recording of Bates' *Anthology of Fantastic Zoology* – dedicated to the conductor and recently made available in Spatial Audio exclusively on the new Apple Music Classical app.

[Jessie Montgomery](#), who was appointed CSO Mead Composer-in-Residence in 2021 and is the eleventh composer and sixth woman to hold the post since its inception in 1987, composed her CSO-commissioned *Hymn for Everyone* last spring, as her first collaboration with the Orchestra in her new role. Based on a hymn she wrote as a reflection on personal and collective challenges happening at the time, it is, she says, “a kind of meditation for orchestra, exploring various washes of color and timbre through each repetition of the melody.” After reading her mother’s “Poem for Everyone,” discovered after her death in May of 2021, Montgomery titled the piece in homage to her.

Reviewing the world premiere, the *Chicago Tribune* found the work “undoubtedly greater than the sum of its parts. Its controlled release of emotion, meted out tactfully by Muti on Thursday night, gestures to something far deeper than what glimmers on its surface.” *Chicago on the Aisle* continued: “*Hymn for Everyone* swells gently but irrepressibly from a quiet statement by French horn and violas through the addition of English horn to a steady deepening and enrichment of colors and textures that ultimately envelops the full orchestra. Muti led a lustrous performance that left this listener wishing only to begin the journey again.”

CSO violist and composer [Max Raimi](#)’s *Three Lisel Mueller Settings* was a CSO commission that received its world premiere in 2018. The work was funded by Chicago’s Poetry Foundation and is based on what *WTTW* called “a trio of fierce, haunting poems” written by Pulitzer Prize winner Lisel Mueller, since deceased, who arrived in the U.S. at the age of 15 after her family fled from the Nazis. Renowned American mezzo-soprano Elizabeth DeShong is the featured soloist, and for each of the three poems Raimi additionally selected a deeply admired colleague from the Orchestra – Principal Clarinet Stephen Williamson, Principal Bassoon Keith Buncke, and Principal Bass Alexander Hanna – to be in dialogue with the singer.

The *WTTW* review continued: “What is most astonishing about Raimi’s work is his audacious, highly original deployment of the full spectrum of the orchestra, with particular attention paid to the thrilling, wonderfully original use of a percussion section that includes everything from cymbals, wood block, tambourine, triangle and drums to a lead pipe struck with a hammer. This is a riveting new work, played with immense virtuosity by the orchestra.”

[Philip Glass](#)’ Symphony No. 11 hearkens back to some of his earliest influences, when he was accepted into a program at the University of Chicago in 1952 that allowed him to skip the last two years of high school and begin his university education. He first heard the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at the beginning of Fritz Reiner’s tenure and found himself drawn to the epic scope of symphonies by Bruckner and Mahler. Premiered in 2017, Symphony No. 11 received its first CSO performances in February 2022, also marking the first performance of any of Glass’ symphonies by the Orchestra. Glass himself was present for the occasion, and when Muti invited him to the podium following the performance he received enthusiastic applause and a standing ovation from both the audience and the musicians.

The *Chicago Sun-Times* called the symphony “an intoxicating, sometimes breathless kaleidoscopic swirl of overlapping sound and texture,” while *WTTW* elaborated: “Glass’ wonderfully ingenious use of every instrument on the stage was thrilling, and out of the ordinary, and driven by the sort of elaborate rhythmic patterns and repetitions that signaled this work could only be a ‘Glass-work,’ while also being infused with a subtle streak of dreamy, modern romanticism, rich theatricality and a hypnotic unpredictability.”

*Contemporary American Composers* was produced, edited and mixed by Grammy Award-winning producer David Frost and recorded by Grammy Award-winning engineer Charlie Post. The album was recorded live in Orchestra Hall at Symphony Center in March 2018 (Raimi), February 2022 (Glass) and April 2022 (Montgomery).

Jessie Montgomery’s *Hymn for Everyone* was commissioned by Riccardo Muti, Zell Music Director, Chicago Symphony Orchestra and made possible through the generous support of the Helen Zell Commissioning Program and co-commissioned by the National Symphony Orchestra and the Music Academy of the West.

Max Raimi’s *Three Lisel Mueller Settings* was commissioned by Riccardo Muti, Zell Music Director, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and generously funded by the Poetry Foundation.

This recording was made possible through the generous support of the TAWANI Foundation.

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

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**Contemporary American Composers**

**RICCARDO MUTI** Conductor  
**CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

## **JESSIE MONTGOMERY**

1 *Hymn for Everyone* 11:22

## **MAX RAIMI**

### **Three Lisel Mueller Settings**

Elizabeth DeShong, mezzo-soprano

2 The Story 3:28

3 An Unanswered Question 5:14

4 Hope 7:36

## **PHILIP GLASS**

### **Symphony No. 11**

5 Movement 1 10:55

6 Movement 2 15:20

7 Movement 3 12:59

Total 67:00

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Producer: David Frost

Recording Engineer: Charlie Post

Editing and Mixing: David Frost

Mastering: Silas Brown, Legacy Sound

Photography: Todd Rosenberg

Cover Design: Todd Land

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Recorded live in Orchestra Hall at Symphony Center, Chicago

March 2018 (Raimi) | February 2022 (Glass) | April 2022 (Montgomery)

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## **Riccardo Muti**

Riccardo Muti is one of the world's preeminent conductors. In 2010, he became the tenth music director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Muti's leadership has been distinguished by the strength of his artistic partnership with the Orchestra; his dedication to performing great works of the past and present, including sixteen world premieres to date; the enthusiastic reception he and the CSO have received on national and international tours; and eleven recordings on the CSO Resound label, with three Grammy awards among them. In addition, his contributions to the cultural life of Chicago — with performances throughout its many neighborhoods and at Orchestra Hall — have made a lasting impact on the city.

Born in Naples, Riccardo Muti studied piano under Vincenzo Vitale at the Conservatory of San Pietro a Majella, graduating with distinction. He subsequently received a diploma in composition and conducting from the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory in Milan under the guidance of Bruno Bettinelli and Antonino Votto.

He first came to the attention of critics and the public in 1967, when he won the Guido Cantelli Conducting Competition, by unanimous vote of the jury, in Milan. In 1968, he became principal conductor of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, a position he held until 1980. In 1971, Muti was invited by Herbert von Karajan to conduct at the Salzburg Festival, the first of many occasions, which led to a celebration of fifty years of artistic collaboration with the Austrian festival in 2020. During the 1970s, Muti was chief conductor of London's Philharmonia Orchestra (1972–1982), succeeding Otto Klemperer. From 1980 to 1992, he inherited the position of music director of the Philadelphia Orchestra from Eugene Ormandy.

From 1986 to 2005, he was music director of Teatro alla Scala, and during that time, he directed major projects such as the three Mozart/Da Ponte operas and Wagner's *Ring* cycle in addition to his exceptional contributions to the Verdi repertoire. His tenure as music director of Teatro alla Scala, the longest in its history, culminated in the triumphant reopening of the restored opera house on December 7, 2004, with Salieri's *Europa riconosciuta*.

Over the course of his extraordinary career, Riccardo Muti has conducted the most important orchestras in the world: from the Berlin Philharmonic to the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and from the New York Philharmonic to the Orchestre National de France; as well as the Vienna Philharmonic, an orchestra to which he is linked by particularly close and important ties, and with which he has appeared at the Salzburg Festival since 1971. When Muti was invited to lead the Vienna Philharmonic's 150th-anniversary concert, the orchestra presented him with the Golden Ring, a special sign of esteem and affection, awarded only to a few select conductors. In 2021, he conducted the Vienna Philharmonic in the New Year's Concert for the sixth time.

Muti has received numerous international honors over the course of his career. He is Cavaliere di Gran Croce of the Italian Republic and a recipient of the German Verdienstkreuz. He received the decoration of Officer of the Legion of Honor from French President Nicolas Sarkozy. He was made an honorary Knight Commander of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth II. The Salzburg Mozarteum awarded him its silver medal for his contribution to Mozart's music, and in Vienna, he was elected an honorary member of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Vienna Hofmusikkapelle and Vienna State Opera. The State of Israel has honored him with the Wolf Prize in the arts. In July 2018, President Petro Poroshenko presented Muti with the State Award of Ukraine during the Roads of Friendship concert at the Ravenna Festival in Italy following earlier performances in Kiev. In October 2018, Muti received the prestigious Praemium Imperiale for Music of the Japan Arts Association in Tokyo.

In September 2010, Riccardo Muti became music director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and was named 2010 Musician of the Year by *Musical America*. In 2011, Muti was selected as the recipient of the coveted Birgit Nilsson Prize. In 2011, he received the *Opera News Award* in New York City and Spain's prestigious Prince of Asturias Award for the Arts. That summer, he was named an honorary member of the Vienna Philharmonic and honorary director for life of the Rome Opera. In May 2012, he was awarded the highest papal honor: the Knight of the Grand Cross First Class of the Order of St. Gregory the Great by Pope Benedict XVI. In 2016, he was honored by the Japanese government with the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star. On August 15, 2021, Muti received the Great Golden Decoration of Honor for Services to the Republic of Austria, the highest possible civilian honor from the Austrian government.

Passionate about teaching young musicians, Muti founded the Luigi Cherubini Youth Orchestra in 2004 and the Riccardo Muti Italian Opera Academy in 2015. The purpose of the Italian Opera Academy — which takes place in Italy, as well as in Japan since 2019 as part of a multi-year collaboration with the Tokyo Spring Festival — is to pass on Muti's expertise to young musicians and to foster a better understanding of the complex journey to the realization of an opera. Through *Le vie dell'Amicizia* (The Roads of Friendship), a project of the Ravenna Festival in Italy, he has conducted in many of the world's most troubled areas in order to bring attention to civic and social issues. The label RMMUSIC is responsible for Riccardo Muti's recordings.

[riccardomuti.com](http://riccardomuti.com)

[riccardomutioperacademy.com](http://riccardomutioperacademy.com)

[riccardomutimusic.com](http://riccardomutimusic.com)

### **Chicago Symphony Orchestra: [cso.org](http://cso.org)**

Founded by Theodore Thomas in 1891, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra is consistently hailed as one of the greatest orchestras in the world. Since 2010, the pre-eminent conductor Riccardo Muti has served as its 10th music director. Jessie Montgomery is Mead Composer-in-Residence, and Hilary Hahn is CSO Artist-in-Residence.

From baroque through contemporary music, the CSO commands a vast repertoire. Its renowned musicians annually perform more than 150 concerts, most at Symphony Center in Chicago and, each summer, at the suburban Ravinia Festival. They regularly tour nationally and internationally. Since 1892, the CSO has made 63 international tours, performing in 29 countries on five continents.

People around the globe listen to weekly radio broadcasts of CSO concerts and recordings on the WFMT radio network and online at [cso.org/radio](http://cso.org/radio). Recordings by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus have earned 64 Grammy Awards from the Recording Academy. Two Grammys were awarded in 2011 for Muti's recording with the CSO and Chorus of Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* (Muti's first of eleven releases with the CSO to date). Find details on these and many other CSO recordings at [cso.org/resound](http://cso.org/resound).

The CSO is part of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association, which also includes the Chicago Symphony Chorus and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago (Ken-David Masur, Principal Conductor), a training ensemble for emerging professionals. Through its prestigious Symphony Center Presents series, the CSOA presents guest artists and ensembles from a variety of genres — classical, jazz, world and contemporary.

The Negaunee Music Institute at the CSO offers community and education programs that annually engage more than 200,000 people of diverse ages and backgrounds. Through the Institute and other activities, including a free annual concert led by Muti, the CSO is committed to using the power of music to create connections and build community.

The CSO is supported by thousands of patrons, volunteers and institutional and individual donors. The CSO's music director position is endowed in perpetuity by a generous gift from the Zell Family Foundation. The Negaunee Foundation provides generous support in perpetuity for the work of the Negaunee Music Institute.