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ROBERT KAHN NAMED CSO ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR FOR 2026/27 SEASON

Collaboration Between the Solti Foundation U.S. and Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association Creates Opportunity for American Conductors

CHICAGO — The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association (CSOA) and the [Solti Foundation U.S.](#) announce that Robert Kahn has been named CSO Assistant Conductor for the 2026/27 Season. In this role, Kahn will offer support as a cover conductor during select subscription weeks, lead youth concerts in March 2027, and conduct the Civic Orchestra of Chicago and young musicians in the January 2027 finals of the Crain-Maling Foundation CSO Young Artists Competition.

Kahn was one of three candidates selected by the Solti Foundation U.S. to audition with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and was awarded the position by a majority decision from CSO musicians.

The position was developed to provide valuable professional experience to a talented American conductor early in their career. It builds on the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's tradition of engaging assistant and associate conductors that has continued throughout the majority of the ensemble's history.

Board Chair of the Solti Foundation U.S. Penny Van Horn said:

“It is an honor for the Solti Foundation U.S. to collaborate with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association to sponsor the CSO Assistant Conductor position for the 2026/27 Season. I want to extend my sincere thanks to my colleagues at the Foundation who participated in this process. This position aligns with our mission to support emerging American conductors as they build their professional experience. I can't imagine a greater opportunity for a young conductor than being connected to the artistry and exceptional level of music making at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and we're delighted that Robert Kahn has been selected for this role.”

CSOA Vice President for Artistic Planning Cristina Rocca added:

“We’re grateful to the Solti Foundation U.S. for its very generous support of the CSO Assistant Conductor position in the 2026/27 Season and for its partnership to shape this role into a meaningful experience for an early career conductor. I also wish to thank the musicians of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra for their participation in this process.”

About Robert Kahn

Dutch American conductor Robert Kahn is known for his clarity, versatility and command of both operatic and symphonic repertoire. A Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Award recipient, he works closely with the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia, where he recently led Mozart’s *Così fan tutte* and prepared new productions for the company’s 2025/26 Season.

Kahn completed the Conducting Fellowship at the Curtis Institute of Music in 2022 under Philadelphia Orchestra Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Since then, he has established strong relationships with major orchestras, serving as cover conductor for the Philadelphia Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic. He also assisted the Chicago Symphony Orchestra with Jaap van Zweden during the 2025 European tour, and assisted Nézet-Séguin with the Rotterdam Philharmonic on a European tour of Wagner’s *Die Walküre*. In 2024, he made his conducting debut with the Marin Symphony in California.

Highlights of the 2025/26 season include his European debut with the Olten Philharmonic in Izmir, Turkey and leading Opera Philadelphia’s workshop of the newly commissioned opera *Complications in Sue*. Kahn was recently named a finalist in the Great Falls Symphony’s search for a music director for its 67th season, and in March 2026 he makes his Dutch National Opera debut, conducting Hannah Kendall’s *The Knife of Dawn* in Amsterdam.

robertkahn.com

About the Solti Foundation U.S.

[The Solti Foundation U.S.](http://TheSoltiFoundationU.S.) was established to honor the memory of legendary conductor Sir Georg Solti and his dedication to helping young artists. Through the generosity of its donors and the expertise of its board, the Solti Foundation U.S. identifies, supports and promotes emerging young conductors as they launch their classical careers. In doing so, the Foundation extends the legacy and influence of Sir Georg by ensuring that very promising American conductors, age 36 and under, get the opportunity to demonstrate their musicianship, leadership and full potential to the broadest possible audience. [Sir Georg Solti](http://SirGeorgSolti) was the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s eighth music director from 1969 until 1991 and its music director laureate from 1991 until 1997.

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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](https://www.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 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.