



CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ASSOCIATION
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WINNER OF CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM ANNOUNCED

Venezuelan Violinist Gabriela Lara to Become First CSO Fellow Beginning in 2022-23 Season

CHICAGO — The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association (CSOA) has announced the winner of the newly-launched Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) Fellowship program. Venezuelan violinist Gabriela Lara will become the first CSO Fellow at the beginning of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's 2022-23 season in September. The new fellowship program, developed with support from Zell Music Director Riccardo Muti, the CSO Members' Committee and Chicago Federation of Musicians, will welcome musicians from populations that have traditionally been underrepresented in American symphony orchestras, including, but not limited to, those who identify as Black, Latino or Indigenous. As a CSO Fellow, Lara will gain significant experience rehearsing and performing with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, with the opportunity to work with renowned conductors and receive training and mentorship from CSO musicians to better equip her to win auditions in U.S. orchestras. Lara will also receive compensation to perform a minimum of 20 subscription weeks with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, as well as financial support to attend auditions, and will have access to up to 10, one-hour private lessons with a CSO musician annually.

Gabriela Lara graduated in 2022 with a Bachelor of Music degree in Violin Performance from the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University, where she was a student of Almita Vamos. Lara is also the recipient of a 2022 Project Inclusion Fellowship from the Grant Park Symphony Orchestra. Originally from Barquisimeto, Venezuela, Lara began her violin studies at age 8 and later became a member of the Latin American Violin Academy, where she was a student of Jose Francisco del Castillo and Francisco Diaz. Lara was also a member of "El Sistema" in Venezuela, where she served as a Concertmaster of the Lara Youth Orchestra and the National Youth Orchestra of Venezuela in 2017 and performed with Gustavo Dudamel and the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra as part of a 2016 European Tour. Lara was also the second-place winner in the 2021 Sphinx Solo Competition and the winner of the 2021 Frank Preuss International Violin Competition.

The CSO Fellowship Program has been developed with full support from Zell Music Director Riccardo Muti as part of his ongoing commitment to training the next generation of musicians, as well as the CSO Members' Committee and the Chicago Federation of Musicians. The program builds upon the CSOA's longstanding focus on the training and development of musicians that began more than 100 years ago with the establishment of the [Civic Orchestra of Chicago](#)—the preprofessional training orchestra affiliated with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. The CSOA has gone on to create or participate in programs that support young musicians from communities that are traditionally underrepresented in the orchestral field, specifically those interested in gaining entrance to top conservatories and post-secondary music schools as they seek a career in classical music performance. These programs include the [Percussion Scholarship Program](#), [Chicago Musical Pathways Initiative \(CMPI\)](#) and [Sphinx Orchestral Partners Auditions](#).

The CSO Fellowship Program is currently open to early-career string players (violin, viola, cello, double bass) who have graduated from college, university or conservatory and are from populations that have traditionally been underrepresented in American symphony orchestras, including, but not limited to, those who identify as Black, Latino or Indigenous. Additionally, applicants must have U.S. citizenship, permanent U.S. residency, or an O-1 or OPT visa at the time of application and must be a member in good standing of the American Federation of Musicians (AFM), or willing to join the AFM if accepted to the Fellowship. If accepted, a Fellow may be invited to remain in the program for up to three years. For information and updates about the CSO Fellowship, visit cso.org/fellowship.

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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 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 62 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. Recordings by the CSO have earned 63 Grammy Awards, including two in 2011 for Muti's recording with the CSO and Chorus of Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* (Muti's first of eight releases with the CSO to date). Find details on these and many other CSO recordings at 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.