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APRIL PROGRAMMING AT SYMPHONY CENTER AND IN THE COMMUNITY

CHICAGO — April 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. April CSO concert highlights include return podium appearances for guest conductors Karina Canellakis (April 3-5), Harry Bicket (April 10-13) and Jaap van Zweden (April 17-19).

April programming showcases a variety of guest artists and soloists including a collaboration with The Joffrey Ballet and the world premiere performances of newly choreographed works — Amy Hall Garner’s *Second Nature* and Nicolas Blanc’s *Les Bœufoons* (April 10-13). CSO Zell Music Director Designate Klaus Mäkelä returns in April for a two-week residency that opens with performances of Mahler’s Third Symphony. Mäkelä leads the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus and Uniting Voices Chicago with internationally acclaimed alto Wiebke Lehmkuhl in her CSO debut. James Bass is the guest chorus director (April 24-26).

Additional highlights include programs across a variety of CSO concert series. The CSO for Kids Once Upon a Symphony series continues with South African folktale Abiyoyo (April 5). CSO Chamber Music features three distinct programs across the community — CSO Brass Quintet at the University of Chicago (April 6), a collaboration with the Driehaus Museum featuring music for string quartet and flute (April 8) and the South Loop Quintet at the South Shore Cultural Center (April 27).

Symphony Center Presents (SCP) concerts in April feature highlights such as an evening with two of jazz’s award-winning composer-performers: Hiromi and Brandee

Younger (April 4). Symphony Center also welcomes Boleros de Noche featuring Tres Souls & Trío Remembranza (April 12) and the Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain (April 15). The SCP Piano series continues in April with a recital by celebrated pianist Emanuel Ax (April 27).

The Civic Orchestra of Chicago is part of several concert programs at the beginning of the month. Carlos Miguel Prieto leads the Civic in performances of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 7 at Wentz Concert Hall in Naperville (April 5) and Orchestra Hall (April 6). Conductor Kyle Dickson leads the Equity Arc Pathways Orchestra Finale concert featuring musicians from the CSO and Civic Orchestra of Chicago alongside high school musicians from Equity Arc's National Collective for Musical Pathways (April 6).

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

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

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Canellakis Conducts Rachmaninov ([April 3-5](#))

Chief Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra and the Principal Guest Conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra Karina Canellakis leads a program featuring works inspired by Earth's natural wonders. Sibelius' *The Oceanides* opens the program, depicting the broad majesty of the sea and Greek mythological water nymphs. Dvořák's orchestral poem *The Wild Dove* depicts a tragic Czech folktale about a dove's song, and Rachmaninov's Symphonic Dances closes the program with nostalgic memories of autumn.

Prior to the Saturday, April 5 concert, join the CSO Student Ambassadors for [College Night](#). This semiannual event is \$15 for college students and includes a casual preconcert pizza dinner, a Q&A session with a CSO musician and admission to the concert.

CSO x The Joffrey Ballet ([April 10-13](#))

The CSO welcomes The Joffrey Ballet and The Mary B. Galvin Artistic Director Ashley Wheater MBE for the third artistic collaboration since 2019. Music Director of Santa Fe Opera Harry Bicket conducts the program featuring Haydn's Symphony No. 45 (*Farewell*) and the CSO's first performances of Chevalier de Saint-Georges Joseph Bologne's Symphony No. 1. The world premiere performances of two newly choreographed works featuring dancers from The Joffrey Ballet complete the program — *Second Nature*, with choreography by Amy Hall Garner set to Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson's Sinfonietta No. 1, and *Les Bœufoons*, with choreography by Nicolas Blanc set to Milhaud's *Le Bœuf sur le toit*.

Before the performance on Friday, April 11, join members of the CSO African American Network (AAN) for an exclusive featuring Renée Baker's chamber opera *Through His Spirit*, performed by musicians from the Civic Orchestra of Chicago and Chicago Modern Orchestra Project. A free reception ticket is required for admission. Reserve concert and reception tickets at [cso.org/aan](https://www.cso.org/aan).

Mahler 7 with Jaap van Zweden ([April 17-19](#))

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. 7, a Chicago preview preceding the CSO's [May European Tour](#), including its appearance as the only North American orchestra at the [2025 Mahler Festival](#) at the Royal Concertgebouw in Amsterdam.

Mäkelä Conducts Mahler 3 ([April 24-26](#))

CSO Zell Music Director Designate Klaus Mäkelä leads the Orchestra in Mahler's monumental Symphony No. 3, which features German alto Wiebke Lehmkuhl in her CSO debut as soloist and two choruses — the Chicago Symphony Chorus, prepared by Guest Chorus Director James Bass, and Uniting Voices Chicago, Josephine Lee, Artistic Director.

CSO for Kids

Once Upon a Symphony: Abiyoyo ([April 5 & 19, 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 the story adaptation by singer-songwriter Pete Seeger, musical selections combine with this South African lullaby and folktale about 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 Chamber Music

CSO Chamber Music at the University of Chicago ([April 6](#))

The CSO Brass Quintet, featuring Principal Trumpet Esteban Batallán, trumpet John Hagstrom, horn David Griffin, trombone Michael Mulcahy and Principal Tuba Gene Pokorny, performs Arnold's Quintet for Brass, Sauer's transcription of J.S. Bach's *The Art of Fugue* and Carlier's arrangement of Telemann's Trio Sonata in G Minor.

This concert is presented by UChicago Presents and takes place at Mandel Hall (1131 E. 57th St., Chicago) at University of Chicago.

CSO Chamber Music at the Driehaus Museum ([April 8](#))

CSO musicians Mihaela Ionescu (violin), Hermine Gagné (violin), Wei-Ting Kuo (viola), Richard Hirschl (cello) and Jennifer Gunn (flute) present three works in celebration of the exhibition *A Tale of Today: Materialities*. This interdisciplinary program opens with an introduction to the exhibition by Driehaus Museum Executive Director Lisa M. Key, followed by Philip Glass' Quartet Satz; Beethoven's Serenade for Flute, Violin and Viola in D Major, Op. 25; and George Chadwick's String Quartet No. 4 in E Minor.

This concert is presented by the Driehaus Museum and takes place at Murphy Auditorium at the Driehaus Museum (50 E. Erie St., Chicago).

South Loop Quintet at South Shore Cultural Center ([April 27](#))

The South Loop Quintet, featuring CSO musicians So Young Bae (violin), Danny Yehun Jin (violin), Wei-Ting Kuo (viola), Sunghee Choi (viola) and Karen Basrak (cello), presents two works of the string quintet canon. The program opens with Mozart's String Quintet in C Major, K. 515, followed by Dvořák's *American* Quintet, which incorporates influences from folk music and the composer's 1893 summer spent in the Iowa countryside.

This free concert takes place at South Shore Cultural Center (7059 S. South Shore Dr., Chicago). Reservations are required and open April 11.

Symphony Center Presents Jazz

Hiromi's Sonicwonder / Brandee Younger Trio ([April 4](#))

Japanese pianist and award-winning composer Hiromi and her quartet, featuring Adam O'Farrill (trumpet), Hadrien Feraud (bass) and Gene Coye (drums), explore musical landscapes ranging from video-game soundtracks to jazz-fusion influences like Herbie Hancock. This is an album release concert for Hiromi's *Out There*.

Known for her NAACP Image Award®-winning album *Brand New Life* and "Beautiful is Black" — for which she was the first black woman to be nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Instrumental Composition — revolutionary harpist Brandee Younger opens the program with her trio, featuring Rashaan Carter (bass) and Allan Mednard (drums).

Explore a variety of activities throughout Symphony Center following the concert. In celebration of her new album, *Out There*, Hiromi will participate in a postconcert CD signing in the first-floor Rotunda, with merchandise available in the Orchestra Hall outer lobby before, during and after the performance.

Underground: A Night for Creatives at Symphony Center returns with a postconcert event in Grainger Ballroom. Tickets are required for entry. Learn more at cso.org/underground.

Symphony Center Presents

Boleros de Noche featuring Tres Souls & Trío Remembranza ([April 12](#))

Boleros de Noche celebrates Latin American bolero music, featuring two trios. Founded in Puerto Rico, guitar and vocal ensemble Trío Remembranza opens the concert, starring founder Gabriel Rodriguez Ortiz, Angel Jiménez and Angel Camacho. The evening closes with Tres Souls' modern spin on vintage sounds and songs of the 1940s-1960s, songs from the Golden Era of Mexican Cinema and vibrant interpretations of boleros, featuring Rocio Mendoza, Jesus Martinez and Boleros de Noche Founder and Creative Director Roberto Carlos.

The CSO Latino Alliance hosts a postconcert networking reception in Grainger Ballroom. Tickets are required for entry. Learn more about the event and specially priced tickets for individual Latino Alliance concert dates at cso.org/LatinoAlliance.

Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain ([April 15](#))

Founded in 1985, the Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain makes its SCP debut and features ukuleles of all sizes and songs traversing genres from rock music to film themes and jazz — all with a dash of British humor. This playful ensemble interprets everything from Motörhead to the Muppets, Paul Simon to Tchaikovsky, Nirvana to Shirley Bassey and the Beach Boys to Johnny Cash.

Symphony Center Presents Piano

Emanuel Ax ([April 27](#))

Grammy Award-winning pianist Emanuel Ax shares a program ranging from Romantic-era classics such as Beethoven's Sonatas No. 13 and 14 (*Moonlight*) and Schumann's Arabeske in C Major and Fantasy in C Major to contemporary composer John Corigliano's Fantasia on an Ostinato.

Civic Orchestra of Chicago

Civic at Wentz Concert Hall: Prieto Conducts Shostakovich 7 ([April 5](#))

The Civic Orchestra performs a community concert at Wentz Concert Hall & Fine Arts Center (171 E. Chicago Ave., Naperville, IL) led by Grammy Award-winning conductor Carlos Miguel Prieto. The program will also be performed at Symphony Center on Sunday, April 6, at 7:00 p.m.

Prieto Conducts Shostakovich 7 ([April 6](#))

Music Director of the North Carolina Symphony Carlos Miguel Prieto leads Shostakovich's Symphony No. 7. Named the *Leningrad* Symphony and written during the capital city's tragic siege, this poignant and powerful wartime work embodies the striking duality between the composer's public persona and personal perspective in Soviet Russia.

Equity Arc Pathways Orchestra Finale ([April 6](#))

Assistant Conductor for the Memphis Symphony Orchestra and Music Director of the Memphis Youth Symphony Program Kyle Dickson leads the Equity Arc Pathways Orchestra, a combined orchestra featuring pre-college fellows from across the country alongside musicians from the CSO and Civic Orchestra. Coleridge-Taylor's Ballade in A Minor opens the program, followed by Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4.

Selected through a competitive national audition process to participate in this musical intensive, Pathways Orchestra Fellows study at programs across co-presenter Equity Arc's National Collective for Musical Pathways, an alliance committed to preparing musicians from backgrounds that have been historically underrepresented in classical music to achieve their musical aspirations through rigorous, comprehensive training.

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.

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 for more parking and transit options.

Patron Information

Contact Patron Services for personalized assistance online at 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 appearance of Karina Canellakis is sponsored by donors who have made generous commitments to the Women's Board Guest Artist Endowment Fund.

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The appearance of Jaap van Zweden is made possible by the Juli Plant Grainger Fund for Artistic Excellence.

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The Emanuel Ax performance is generously sponsored by Martha C. Nussbaum.

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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 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](#) 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](#), 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](#) 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.