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Press Contact:[Eileen Chambers](#)

312-294-3092

CELLIST DAVID SANDERS TO RETIRE AFTER NEARLY 50 YEARS OF SERVICE IN THE CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CHICAGO – David Sanders, a member of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's cello section since 1974, is set to retire on February 4, 2024. Sanders played his final concert with the Orchestra on January 29 in Rome's Teatro dell' Opera in a performance that capped the 2024 European Tour with Riccardo Muti. Throughout his distinguished career, Sanders performed under music directors Sir Georg Solti, Daniel Barenboim and Riccardo Muti, as well as Principal Conductor Bernard Haitink and Principal Guest Conductor and Conductor Emeritus Pierre Boulez, and participated in 45 international tours, including the Orchestra's first visits to Asia, Australia and South America. Sanders will receive the CSO's Theodore Thomas Medallion for Distinguished Service at a date to be announced.

Reflecting on his time in the CSO, Sanders said: "As a student and young professional, I never dreamed that I would become a member of the Chicago Symphony, and I have tried to be as welcoming to new members who have joined after me as many of the older members were to me when I joined. It has been a privilege to be a member of this great Orchestra and share nearly 50 years of musical memories with exceptional colleagues."

Appointed by Sir Georg Solti to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 1974, Sanders is the last remaining member of the cello section led by the CSO's legendary Principal Cello Frank Miller. Beginning in 1975, he was featured regularly in the CSO chamber music series, including 25 years with the Montagnana Trio, and was a soloist with his fellow CSO cellists in the 1989 subscription concert performances of Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas Brasileiras* No. 1. Sanders was the founder and president for 19 years of the Chicago Cello Society as well as the editor of its newsletter, *The Cello Scroll*. In 2008, he helped organize and performed in a concert presented by the Cello Society of 20 solo works of David Popper, a concert that featured five cellists from the CSO. In 2010, he organized and performed in a concert of Beethoven's five sonatas for cello and piano as part of the CSO chamber music series.

Sanders began playing cello at the age of 12 and started taking lessons at the age of 14 in high school in Miami, Florida. He made his solo debut less than two years later with the Miami Symphonic Society Orchestra. He was a scholarship student at the University of Miami and

Florida State University summer orchestra festivals, Eastern Music Festival and London Symphony Institute.

Sanders began his studies at the Northwestern University School of Music in the fall of 1967, and also became a member of the Chicago Civic Orchestra, attending weekly cello sectionals with CSO Principal Cellist Frank Miller. In the summer of 1968, he had intensive lessons with Miller, spending 8 to 10 hours a day practicing the cello. In the summer of 1969, he joined the Grant Park Symphony Orchestra, where he was a member for five seasons. Upon graduation from Northwestern University in 1971, he became a member of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra. In 1972 he joined the Orchestra of the Lyric Opera of Chicago, where he played for two seasons. In December 1973, following his second season at Lyric, he became Principal Cellist of the Orlando Symphony Orchestra, and was appointed to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra the following year.

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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. Riccardo Muti, the Orchestra's distinguished 10th music director from 2010 until 2023, was named Music Director Emeritus for Life beginning with the 2023/24 Season. Jessie Montgomery is Mead Composer-in-Residence, and Hilary Hahn is CSO Artist-in-Residence.

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 64 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.

