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SYMPHONY BALL, THE CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ASSOCIATION'S LARGEST ANNUAL FUNDRAISER, OFFERS FESTIVE CELEBRATION AT THE START OF THE 2023/24 SEASON

Riccardo Muti and the CSO Welcome Renowned Violinist Leonidas Kavakos as Soloist in Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto at Symphony Ball Concert

Financial Support from Symphony Ball Provides Key Funding for Education and Community Engagement Programs Each Season Including Programs that Connect More Than 20,000 Area Students with Musical Resources of the CSO Each Year

CHICAGO – On [Saturday, September 23, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.](#), the Women's Board of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association (CSOA) along with CSOA Board Trustee Roderick Branch will host Symphony Ball, the organization's largest annual fundraising benefit and a festive part of the opening weekend of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's 2023/24 Season, that includes red-carpet arrivals and a preconcert champagne toast throughout Symphony Center for all concertgoers. The celebratory start to the event is followed by a performance with Riccardo Muti, who steps into his new role as Music Director Emeritus for Life beginning in September, leading the CSO and internationally renowned violinist Leonidas Kavakos in Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto to open the program, which also features Italian opera selections from composers including Puccini, Giordano and Verdi. The evening continues for gala patrons with dinner and dancing at The Four Seasons Hotel Chicago. Northern Trust is the Presenting Sponsor of Symphony Ball. Individual tickets for the Symphony Ball concert are available at [cso.org](#) and information about complete gala package reservations is available at [cso.org/symphonyball](#).

"Symphony Ball is a crucial annual benefit gala that supports the CSO's community engagement and educational initiatives in Chicago and around the world," said CSOA Trustee Roderick Branch. "We will celebrate the incomparable musicians of the CSO and our newly appointed Music Director Emeritus for Life, Riccardo Muti. And we will raise essential funds that sustain important support in communities across Chicago for the CSO's indispensable educational efforts, which annually reach tens of thousands of students who lack access to music education in their schools and are chronically underserved. We encourage members of

the community and the CSO family to participate in this important fundraising moment, whether by joining us in person or by making a gift, small or large, to show their support for the CSO's ongoing impact through music."

"The Women's Board of the CSOA is delighted to welcome music lovers to celebrate with us at Symphony Ball," added Women's Board President Judy Feldman. "This signature event brings us together to both applaud our world-class orchestra and to support the vital community programs of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association. These programs connect Chicagoans from across the city to musical resources in ways that empower them through the gift of music. We invite everyone to join us for this very special evening."

In addition to the concert, patrons may enhance their experience with a gala package that includes a private preconcert reception for Patrons and Sponsors in Buntrock Hall at Symphony Center, as well as the postconcert gala that features cocktails, dinner and dancing at The Four Seasons Hotel Chicago. Cocktail attire is suggested.

The elegant surroundings that will greet Symphony Ball guests at the Gala portion of the evening are created this year by Designer Vince Hart at VH Designs. "The inspiration for the décor is based on the beautiful and glamorous Italian and French Riviera. The look is colorful, sophisticated and fun. We chose flowers in shades of azure blue, tangerine, mango, turquoise and silver with cabana stripes, colorful textured linens, Murano-inspired glassware and café style seating," said Hart. "The look is transportive and we are excited to bring this level of culture and glamour to this year's event."

During the cocktail hour, guests will enjoy Croque Monsieur, margherita flatbread, seared ahi tuna, and grilled ginger shrimp. Specialty cocktails will include a Vodka Sunrise and an Orange Bellini.

Dinner will begin with a mesclun lettuce and baby kale salad with roasted butternut squash, candied hazelnuts, dried cranberries and parmesan cheese, topped with balsamic vinaigrette and balsamic pearls. The entrée will be a combination plate of sea salt roasted filet of beef with a Chianti reduction sauce and lobster and a crab cake with lobster butter served with sundried tomato risotto and assorted colorful fall vegetables including bell peppers and carrots. A vegetarian entrée served upon request will include vegetable pave with piquillo pepper sauce. The dessert course will feature a trio of assorted berries, chocolate pot au crème and apple crumble. Throughout dinner, special French and Italian wine varieties – Louis Latour Macon Lugny Les Genievres Maconnias and Pio Cesare Barbara D'Alba – will be poured.

Echoing the era of elegant jazz clubs for which Chicago once was known, gala guests will enjoy listening and dancing to the music of the Steve Bissat Orchestra, who performs regularly at the Drake Hotel.

The annual Symphony Ball fundraising benefit provides essential support for the CSOA, which annually reaches diverse groups of nearly 20,000 students and educators across more than 100 schools in over 60 zip codes and 30 neighborhoods in the Chicagoland area through the programs of the Negaunee Music Institute at the CSO. This includes the Institute's program which provides free tickets and transportation to CSO concerts for students in the Chicago

Public Schools. More information about the Negaunee Music Institute at the CSO and its programs is available at cso.org/education-community/negaunee-music-institute.

Individual tickets for the Symphony Ball concert, including the red-carpet experience and preconcert toast, range from \$45 to \$275 and are available online at cso.org or by calling [312-294-3000](tel:312-294-3000).

Gala dinner packages, which include tickets to the Symphony Ball concert, start at \$1,000 per person and can be purchased by phone at [312-294-3185](tel:312-294-3185) or by requesting a reservation by email at symphonyball@cso.org.

All artists, programs, and ticket prices are subject to change.

Northern Trust is the Presenting Sponsor of Symphony Ball.

Other notable sponsors include ITW, Zell Family Foundation, Ling Z. and Michael C. Markovitz, TAWANI Foundation, Bank of America, Latham & Watkins LLP, Jenner & Block and Dr. and Mrs. Gene and Jean Stark.

Chicago Magazine is a media partner of Symphony Ball.

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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. Riccardo Muti, the Orchestra's distinguished 10th music director from 2010 until 2023, was recently 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 63 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. 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 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**, 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.