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## **CSO ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE JOYCE DIDONATO CONTINUES 2025/26 SEASON PROGRAMS IN FEBRUARY AND MAY**

### **DiDonato Joins April 26 Notes for Peace Reunion**

CHICAGO — Internationally renowned and multi-Grammy Award-winning mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato continues as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) Artist-in-Residence for the 2025/26 Season with two upcoming programs at Symphony Center featuring music by composers Kevin Puts (*Emily – No Prisoner Be*, February 10) and Peter Lieberson (*Neruda Songs*, May 7–9).

In *Emily – No Prisoner Be*, [DiDonato](#) joins Grammy Award- and Emmy Award-winning ensemble, [Time For Three](#) to bring to life 24 vivid poems by Emily Dickinson. Dickinson's poetry finds new resonance in this captivating musical journey, set to music by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Kevin Puts (*The Hours*, *Silent Night*). This bold new work will be featured on an album set for release on January 30. The program is part of the Symphony Center Presents (SCP) Chamber Music series. A CD signing with DiDonato and Time For Three in Symphony Center's Rotunda follows the February 10 program. Merchandise can be purchased at the Symphony Store and Orchestra Hall lobby prior to the signing, which is free and open to all ticketholders.

DiDonato performs with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as she sings the *Neruda Songs* (May 7-9), Peter Lieberson's heartbreakingly sensuous song cycle set to the poetry of Pablo Neruda. Conductor Edward Gardner and the CSO complete the program with Barber's First Essay for Orchestra and Walton's First Symphony. A free half-hour preconcert conversation featuring WFMT Music Director Oliver Camacho takes place in Orchestra Hall 75 minutes before the performance; no additional tickets are needed.

On April 26, DiDonato joins the [Civic Orchestra of Chicago Fellows](#), guest artists from the U.K.-based organization Irene Taylor Trust and Chicago-area vocalists for the [Notes for Peace Reunion](#). The special concert celebrates eight years of the [Notes for Peace](#) program, which empowers Chicago families who have lost loved ones to gun violence to compose original songs of tribute. DiDonato will work with a family to compose a brand new song of tribute, which she will perform live on this concert and professionally record to appear alongside over 100 other recordings on [notesforpeace.org](#). The [Negaunee Music Institute](#) at the CSO presents the concert, which takes place at Epiphany Center for the Arts (201 S. Ashland Ave., Chicago). Tickets are free; reservations are required and open April 8.

DiDonato's residencies focus on fostering strong connections with the Chicago community through impactful education and engagement activities. In addition to the Notes for Peace concert and recording, DiDonato will join a roundtable discussion with the Civic Fellows in February and visit Lincoln Park High School for a Chicago Public Schools Arts Education advocacy event in April.

The appearances follow DiDonato's September 20 performance at Symphony Center with conductor Nikolaj Szeps-Znaider, which was part of the festive Symphony Ball concert during the opening week of the CSO's 2025/26 Season. The program featured vocal pieces by Richard Strauss and Georges Bizet, overtures by Weber and Wagner and selections from Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

For program, ticket and patron information, visit [cso.org](#).

## **Chicago Symphony Orchestra**

### **DiDonato Performs Neruda Songs ([May 7-9](#))**

2025/26 CSO Artist-in-Residence Joyce DiDonato is "a supreme artist, as much through sheer triumph of spirit as through musicianship" (*Financial Times*). The esteemed mezzo-soprano sings the *Neruda Songs*, Peter Lieberman's heartbreakingly sensuous song cycle set to the poetry of Pablo Neruda. Edward Gardner concludes the program with Walton's tumultuous and alluring First Symphony.

Explore the music in a free preconcert conversation featuring Oliver Camacho in Orchestra Hall 75 minutes before the performance. The talk will last approximately 30 minutes. No additional tickets are needed.

## **Symphony Center Presents Chamber Music**

### **Joyce DiDonato in *Emily – No Prisoner Be* ([February 10](#))**

Renowned mezzo-soprano and 2025/26 CSO Artist-in-Residence Joyce DiDonato takes center stage in *Emily – No Prisoner Be*, an extraordinary collaboration with the classical-roots string trio Time For Three. Set to music by Pulitzer Prize–winning composer Kevin Puts, the work shapes 24 poems by Emily Dickinson into a continuous musical journey. Presented with special lighting and subtle staging, the performance blends music and theater in a way that feels immediate and intimate. Voice and strings move in close conversation, drawing listeners into Dickinson’s inner world — a place of emotional depth, spiritual searching and fierce individuality.

Please join us for a postconcert CD signing with Joyce DiDonato in the Rotunda. Merchandise can be purchased at the Symphony Store and Orchestra Hall lobby prior to the signing. This event is free and open to all ticketholders.

### **About Joyce DiDonato**

With a voice described as “24-carat gold,” Grammy and Olivier Award-winning opera singer Joyce DiDonato is celebrated as one of the most powerful and versatile performers of her generation. Her artistry spans centuries, and she is recognized for her wide-ranging discography and her work as a producer and advocate for the arts. Her recent accomplishments include winning the 14th Concertgebouw Prize and opening the Metropolitan Opera’s 2023 season in the signature role of Sister Helen in *Dead Man Walking*. She also reprised her celebrated role in Kevin Puts’ *The Hours* and recorded and toured with the Grammy Award-winning album *SONGPLAY*.

DiDonato’s 2024/25 Season included a return to the Teatro Real Madrid and a European recital tour. She continued her collaboration with the Philadelphia Orchestra and made her debut with the Norwegian National Opera Orchestra and London Philharmonic Orchestra. In a residency with the Dortmund Konzerthaus, she premiered a new song cycle by Rachel Portman. The season concluded with the highly anticipated premiere of a new work by Kevin Puts at the Bregenz Festival.

DiDonato is also known for her impactful, large-scale projects, such as her groundbreaking three-year tour, EDEN. This ambitious project reached over 15 million people and included educational activities for more than 3,500 children. Her discography with Warner Classics/Erato is extensive, featuring celebrated albums like *In War & Peace*, *Stella di Napoli*, and the Grammy-winning *Diva Diva* and *Drama Queens*. The album *Les Troyens* won *Gramophone*’s Recording of the Year, and her album *Handel’s Agrippina* won *Gramophone*’s Opera Recording of the Year.

## **About the CSO Artist-in-Residence**

The CSO Artist-in-Residence position was introduced in the 2021/22 Season, with celebrated violinist Hilary Hahn being appointed by CSO Music Director Riccardo Muti for three seasons through June 2024. The acclaimed pianist Daniil Trifonov was the CSO Artist-in-Residence for the 2024/25 Season. The CSO Artist-in-Residence performs as a soloist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and in recital and chamber music programs on the Symphony Center Presents series. Beyond performances, the CSO Artist-in-Residence connects with musicians in training and community members through a variety of activities during their time in the role. Since its introduction, the position has been made possible through a generous gift from longtime CSOA supporters James and Brenda Grusecki. [Learn more](#) about their support.

## **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 available for select performances at Symphony Center's 67 E. Adams St. entrance. A round-trip North Shore Shuttle service is available for Friday matinees. Visit [cso.org/parking](https://www.cso.org/parking) for more parking and transit options.

## **Patron Information**

Contact Patron Services for personalized assistance online at [cso.org/contact](https://www.cso.org/contact) or by calling [312-294-3000](tel:312-294-3000), Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

All artists and programs are subject to change.

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association acknowledges support from the Illinois Arts Council.

The Artist in Residence at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra is made possible through a generous gift from James and Brenda Grusecki.

The performance of *Emily – No Prisoner Be* is generously sponsored by Lori Julian for the Julian Family Foundation.

The appearance of Time For Three for *Emily – No Prisoner Be* is made possible by Ann Reiland.

The 2025/26 Civic Orchestra season is generously sponsored by Lori Julian for the Julian Family Foundation, which also provides major funding for the Civic Fellowship program.

The Civic Orchestra of Chicago acknowledges support from the Illinois Arts Council.

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**Symphony Center Presents  
Chamber Music**

Tuesday, February 10, 7:30 p.m.  
**Joyce DiDonato in Emily – No Prisoner Be**  
**Joyce DiDonato**, mezzo-soprano  
**Time For Three**  
**Ranaan Meyer**, bass and vocals  
**Nick Kendall**, violin and vocals  
**Charles Yang**, violin and vocals

PUTS                      *Emily - No Prisoner Be*

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**Chicago Symphony Orchestra**

Thursday, May 7, 2026, 7:30 p.m.  
Friday, May 8, 2026, 7:30 p.m.  
Saturday, May 9, 2026, 7:30 p.m.  
**Chicago Symphony Orchestra**  
**Edward Gardner**, conductor  
**Joyce DiDonato**, mezzo-soprano

BARBER                      First Essay for Orchestra  
LIEBERSON                  *Neruda Songs*  
WALTON                      Symphony No. 1

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Learn more about 2025/26 CSO Artist-in-Residence Joyce DiDonato: [joycedidonato.com](https://joycedidonato.com)

Chicago Symphony Orchestra: [cso.org](https://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](http://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.