RICCARDO MUTI AND CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA’S 2014 PERFORMANCE OF BEETHOVEN’S SYMPHONY NO. 9 AVAILABLE FOR FREE ON-DEMAND VIDEO STREAMING BEGINNING MAY 7, 2015

Performance features Chicago Symphony Chorus and soloists Camilla Nylund, Ekaterina Gubanova, Matthew Polenzani and Eric Owens

CHICAGO—Music Director Riccardo Muti and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s September 2014 performance of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9, which opened the CSO’s 2014/15 season, will be available for free on-demand video streaming beginning May 7, 2015 at 11 a.m. Central time. The performance will be available for viewers worldwide at cso.org/Beethoven9, RiccardoMutiMusic.com, on the CSO’s social media channels including YouTube, Facebook and Twitter.

Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony is recognized today as one of the pivotal works in the history of music by virtue of its humanistic message, its vast scale and organic unity of design and its groundbreaking “Ode to Joy” finale—a setting of Friedrich Schiller’s hymn to universal brotherhood. Although its greatness was not widely understood in the years following the premiere in Vienna on May 7, 1824, it has eventually taken its place as a cultural symbol of rare importance. Like many of Beethoven’s pioneering last works, the Ninth Symphony stands not only as a monument of its own time, but as a gateway to the music of the future.

“Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony is such a sublime work that I only dared to conduct it for the first time after being on the podium for almost 20 years,” remarked CSO Music Director Riccardo Muti. “To try to understand what is behind this sometimes metaphysical language is not easy, but we realize in the end that the message is universal.”

The performance, recorded at Orchestra Hall in Chicago on September 18, 2014, features Riccardo Muti and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony Chorus, prepared
by Chorus Director Duain Wolfe, and vocal soloists soprano Camilla Nylund, mezzo-soprano Ekaterina Gubanova, tenor Matthew Polenzani, and bass-baritone Eric Owens.

Special support from an anonymous donor made it possible to share the 2014 CSO performances of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 with nearly 2,000 individuals who might not have been able to attend, as well as with a worldwide audience via this free, on-demand video stream.

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**Riccardo Muti (riccardomutimusic.com)**

Riccardo Muti, born in Naples, Italy, is one of the preeminent conductors of our day. When he became the 10th music director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 2010, Muti already had more than 40 years of experience at the helm of Maggio Musicale Fiorentino (1968–1980), the Philharmonia Orchestra (1972–1982), the Philadelphia Orchestra (1980–1992) and Teatro alla Scala (1986–2005).

Since 1971, Muti has been closely associated with the Salzburg Festival and the Vienna Philharmonic, of which he is an honorary member. When he conducted the Philharmonic’s 150th anniversary concert in 1992, Muti was presented with the Golden Ring, a special sign of esteem, and in 2001, his artistic contributions to the orchestra were further recognized with the Otto Nicolai Gold Medal.

Muti studied piano at the Conservatory of San Pietro a Majella in Naples, graduating with distinction. He subsequently received a diploma in composition and conducting from the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory in Milan, also graduating with distinction.

Throughout his career, Muti has demonstrated a strong commitment to training young musicians. In 2004, he founded the Orchestra Giovanile Luigi Cherubini (Luigi Cherubini Youth Orchestra) and in 2015, he will begin the Riccardo Muti Italian Opera Academy to train young conductors, répétiteurs and singers in the Italian opera repertoire.

Since 1997, as part of a project of the Ravenna Festival in Italy, *Le vie dell’Amicizia* (The Paths of Friendship), Muti has annually conducted large-scale concerts in troubled areas around the world, using music to promote hope and unity and to bring attention to social, cultural and humanitarian issues.

Muti has received numerous honors from Italy, the United States, Germany, Austria, Great Britain, Israel, Spain, Russia, Sweden and the Vatican, as well as more than 20 honorary degrees from universities across the globe.

His vast catalog of recordings, numbering in the hundreds, ranges from traditional symphonic and operatic repertoire to contemporary works. Muti also has written two books, *Verdi, l’italiano* and *Riccardo Muti: An Autobiography: First the Music, Then the Words*, both published in several languages.

**Chicago Symphony Chorus**

**Duain Wolfe**, Chorus director

**Camilla Nylund**, soprano

**Ekaterina Gubanova**, mezzo-soprano

**Matthew Polenzani**, tenor

**Eric Owens**, bass-baritone
The Chicago Symphony Orchestra: 

Founded in 1891, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra is consistently hailed as one of the greatest orchestras in the world. Since 2010, the preeminent conductor Riccardo Muti has served as its 10th music director. Pierre Boulez is the CSO’s Helen Regenstein Conductor Emeritus, Yo-Yo Ma is its Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant, and Mason Bates and Anna Clyne are its Mead Composers-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 58 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 network and online at cso.org/radio. Recordings by the CSO have earned 62 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 four releases with the CSO to date). Find details on these and many other CSO recordings at [www.cso.org/resound](http://www.cso.org/resound).

The CSO is part of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association, which includes the Chicago Symphony Chorus (Duain Wolfe, Director and Conductor) and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, a preprofessional training ensemble. 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 with Muti and the CSO, the CSO promotes the concept of Citizen Musicianship™: using the power of music to create connections and build community.

The CSO is supported by tens of thousands of patrons, volunteers and institutional and individual donors. Bank of America is the Global Sponsor of the CSO. 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. CSO Tuesday series concerts are sponsored by United Airlines.