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Karina Canellakis & Randall Goosby

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ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-SIXTH SEASON

Thursday, October 29, 2026, at 7:30
Friday, October 30, 2026, at 1:30
Saturday, October 31, 2026, at 7:30

Nikolaj Szeps-Znaider Conductor
Louise Alder Soprano
Konstantin Krimmel Baritone
Chicago Symphony Chorus
Donald Palumbo Director

MOZART — Symphony No. 36 in C Major, K. 425 *(Linz)*
Adagio—Allegro spiritoso
Andante
Menuetto
Presto

INTERMISSION

BRAHMS — *A German Requiem,* Op. 45
Selig sind, die da Leid tragen
Denn alles Fleisch, es ist wie Gras
Herr, lehre doch mich
Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen
Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit
Denn wir haben hie keine bleibende Statt
Selig sind die Toten

LOUISE ALDER
KONSTANTIN KRIMMEL
CHICAGO SYMPHONY CHORUS

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WOLFGANG MOZART

Born January 27, 1756; Salzburg, Austria
Died December 5, 1791; Vienna, Austria

Symphony No. 36 in C Major, K. 425 *(Linz)*



Linz, the capital of Upper Austria and now a large industrial center straddling the banks of the Danube, has given its name to a torte of jam, cloves, cinnamon, and almonds, as well as to this symphony by Mozart. The origins of the linzertorte are long forgotten. The symphony is better documented, though no amount of information can explain how such impeccable music arose from such unfavorable conditions.

In July 1783, after some deliberation, much procrastination, and several false starts, Mozart and his new wife Constanze set off for Salzburg so that Constanze could meet Leopold Mozart, the man who had carefully arranged virtually everything in his son's life except for this marriage. Although Constanze would later destroy all the letters documenting Leopold's anger at his son's wedding, there was no getting around the strain of living under the same roof for several weeks that summer and autumn. For Constanze, it was tedious and miserable; for Wolfgang it was, ultimately, more material for the operas in which he would make something timeless and surpassingly beautiful of human frailty.



On October 26, Constanze sang the high-flying soprano solos in her husband's great C minor mass when it was performed for the first time in Salzburg's Saint Peter's Abbey. The next day, at 9:30 in the morning, Constanze and Wolfgang left Salzburg for Vienna, by way of Linz. Although

COMPOSED
November 1783

FIRST PERFORMANCE
November 4, 1783; Linz, Austria

INSTRUMENTATION
2 oboes, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, strings

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME
31 minutes

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES
October 24 and 25, 1913, Orchestra Hall. Frederick Stock conducting

July 10, 1948, Ravinia Festival. Fritz Busch conducting

MOST RECENT CSO PERFORMANCES
July 19, 1980, Ravinia Festival. Kazuhiro Koizumi conducting

May 12, 13, and 14, 2022, Orchestra Hall. Julian Rachlin conducting

CSO RECORDINGS
1954. Fritz Reiner conducting. RCA

1977. Carlo Maria Giulini conducting. CSO *(From the Archives,* vol. 9: *A Tribute to Carlo Maria Giulini)*

THIS PAGE, FROM TOP: Wolfgang Mozart, detail from a Mozart family portrait by Johann Nepomuk della Croce (1736–1819), ca. 1780–81 | Portrait of Constanze Mozart (1762–1842), ca. 1782–83, by brother-in-law Joseph Lange (1751–1831), husband of her older sister, the soprano Aloysia Weber (ca.1760–1839). Hunterian Museum and Art Gallery, Glasgow, Scotland | NEXT PAGE: Main square, Linz, Austria. Lithograph based on a drawing by Robert Batty (1789–1848), 1821



they were both probably relieved to say goodbye to Leopold and Nannerl (Wolfgang's beloved sister who would later write that her brother had "married, against his father's will, a girl not at all suitable for him"), Wolfgang couldn't resist writing to his father from Linz on October 31, recounting their arrival there the preceding day:

> When we reached the gates of Linz . . . , we found a servant waiting there to drive us to Count Thun's, at whose house we are now staying. I really cannot tell you what kindnesses the family are showering on us. On Tuesday, November 4, I am giving a concert in the theater here and, as I have not a single symphony with me, I am writing a new one at breakneck speed, which must be finished by that time. Well, I must close, because I really must set to work.

Understandable words, for between October 30 and November 4, Mozart had to write a new symphony, copy the parts for the players, and even find time for the luxury of a rehearsal or two before the evening performance. There's something about the matter-of-fact tone of Mozart's letter—"I have not a single symphony with me," as if he had forgotten to pack an extra pair of socks—that suggests he wasn't daunted by the task he had to undertake. Still, producing a masterwork on short notice is no small accomplishment, even for a composer as facile (in the sense of fluent, assured, and poised) as Mozart.

We know almost nothing about the November 4 concert except that it took place as scheduled, with an orchestra probably supplied by the Thun family (who also provided Mozart's lodging), and that the new C major symphony apparently was finished in time and performed as planned. Mozart presented it in Vienna the next April, where it was billed as "a quite new grand symphony," the *Linz* nickname not yet used to give distinction to the town of its birth.

Nothing in the music suggests the haste of its conception. In fact, the opening bars—the first slow introduction in Mozart's symphonies—give the opposite impression: of deliberate, carefully considered music, more deeply serious than customary to open a symphony. (Beethoven is said to have tried to recapture Mozart's achievement at the beginning of a C major symphony he left incomplete

before moving on to his First Symphony.) The ensuing Allegro spiritoso is large and ideally proportioned.

The Andante (sometimes mislabeled Poco adagio) admits trumpets and drums into a symphonic slow movement for the first time, lending a mood of tragedy and drama to otherwise gracious and melodic music. Again, Beethoven followed suit—in his First Symphony, in the same key—probably not knowing that Haydn also had begun to include those instruments by then. Haydn's name, in fact, is the one that comes to mind in the minuet and trio, partly because not even Mozart could surpass his older colleague in these traditional forms, although as this music attests, he could still put his stamp on its archaic conventions. (In his next symphony, the *Prague,* Mozart omits this movement altogether.) The finale, with its unmistakable air of brilliantly wrapping things up—as quickly as possible, or presto, as Mozart dictates—also suggests that Mozart knew his Haydn well and that he was inspired and challenged by this great man whom he would publicly salute, within the year, as his "most dear friend." *C*

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Born May 7, 1833; Hamburg, Germany
Died April 3, 1897; Vienna, Austria

A German Requiem, Op. 45



Brahms wasn't a religious man. Long after he made his name with *A German Requiem*—one of the most personal and deeply religious works of any century—Dvořák remarked, "Such a great man! Such a great soul! And he believes in nothing!"

But Brahms was not as uncomplicated a man as his genial and—in later years—grandfatherly façade suggested, and he was never a true agnostic. Even in his old age, he often would pick up the children's Bible he had been given when he was a year old and read from it at length. It was from that very book that he chose the passages for his first major choral and orchestral work, selecting not the standard requiem texts, but others for which he had a special fondness.

Like his First Symphony, the *German* Requiem took years to find its final shape. It began, in a sense, as piano music. Brahms started his career writing music to play at the piano, and that is how, at the age of twenty, he came to the attention of Robert Schumann, perhaps the greatest music critic among composers. Brahms showed up at the door, his briefcase bursting with music, and Schumann sat spellbound as Brahms displayed his wares at the keyboard. Although he had officially retired, Schumann

COMPOSED
1854–68

FIRST PERFORMANCES
December 1, 1867; Vienna, Austria (first three movements)

April 10, 1868; Bremen, Germany (six movements). The composer conducting

February 18, 1869; Leipzig, Germany (complete)

INSTRUMENTATION
four-part chorus, soprano and baritone soloists, and an orchestra consisting of 2 flutes and piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons and contrabassoon, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, harp, timpani, organ, strings

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME
68 minutes

dashed to his desk to write the last article of his career, introducing Brahms to his readers. In the young pianist's hands, Schumann already heard "veiled symphonies," and he exhorted Brahms to "direct his magic wand where the powers of the masses of chorus and orchestra may lend him their forces." Schumann's suggestion was both wise and prophetic, as time would soon prove, and his track record was undeniably impressive: he had begun his critic's career by introducing another unknown, Frédéric Chopin, with the now-legendary "Hats off, gentlemen—a genius!"

The music we now know as the second movement of *A German Requiem* came first, and it originally was part of a sonata. In the spring of 1854 (only months after Schumann published his send-off), Brahms sat down at the keyboard with Robert's wife Clara and they played through his new two-piano sonata. And just as his relationship with Clara was to develop in mysterious, unpredictable ways, so too did this piano sonata: first, unsatisfactorily, into a symphony, and then as part of his first piano concerto, with a funeral march left unused.

Years passed. In February 1865 Brahms received a telegram from his brother telling him to come home at once if he wished to see his mother before she died. Brahms immediately set off for Vienna but arrived too late. He now knew what to do with that leftover music. For some time, he had been thinking of writing a choral memorial to Robert Schumann, who had died in 1856; now, with a death in his own family, he set to work in earnest on a requiem, reworking the funeral march and writing five other movements in a matter of months. On Good Friday 1868, *A German Requiem* was performed for the first time. Brahms ran into Clara coming up the steps of the Bremen cathedral and proudly escorted her to her seat. Since Robert's death, Clara and Brahms had remained close (Clara, it is said, knew him better than anyone else), but never intimate. Brahms often



FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES

June 24, 1893, Music Hall at the World's Columbian Exposition. Corinne Moore-Lawson and Louis Ehrgott as soloists, Cincinnati Festival Association Chorus (W. L. Blumenschein, director), Theodore Thomas conducting

April 15 and 16, 1898, Auditorium Theatre. Minnie Fish-Griffin and Charles W. Clark as soloists, Chorus of the Association (Arthur Mees, director), Theodore Thomas conducting

June 30, 1983, Ravinia Festival. Kathleen Battle and Håkan Hagegård as soloists, Chicago Symphony Chorus (Margaret Hillis, director), James Levine conducting

MOST RECENT CSO PERFORMANCES

November 10, 11, and 12, 2016, Orchestra Hall. Christiane Karg and Michael Nagy as soloists, Chicago Symphony Chorus (Duain Wolfe, director), Jaap van Zweden conducting

July 22, 2022, Ravinia Festival. Yeree Suh and Matthias Goerne as soloists, Chicago Symphony Chorus (Michael Black, guest director), Marin Alsop conducting

CSO RECORDINGS

1978. Kiri Te Kanawa and Bernd Weikl as soloists, Chicago Symphony Chorus (Margaret Hillis, director), Sir Georg Solti conducting. London

1983. Kathleen Battle and Håkan Hagegård as soloists, Chicago Symphony Chorus (Margaret Hillis, director), James Levine conducting. RCA

1992. Janet Williams and Thomas Hampson as soloists, Chicago Symphony Chorus (Margaret Hillis, director), Daniel Barenboim conducting. Erato

PREVIOUS PAGE: Johannes Brahms, lithograph portrait by Georg Engelbach (1817–1894), 1865. Hamburg State and University Library Carl von Ossietzky Collection | THIS PAGE: Portrait of Johanna Henrika Christiane Brahms, née Nissen (1789–1865), mother of the composer. Vienna, Austria, Gesellschaft Der Musikfreunde. Photo by DeAgostini/Getty Images | OPPOSITE PAGE: Central nave of Saint Peter's Cathedral in Bremen, as photographed in 1876. Brahms conducted his *German* Requiem there on Good Friday, April 10, 1868.

seemed reserved and distant, even with friends, a tendency he inherited from his father, who attended the performance, and, alone among those gathered, sat stony faced.

It was the powerful image of Brahms's mother who set the requiem in motion, and it was her spirit that steered it to its final form. Brahms was still not satisfied with the work and, a month after the Bremen performance, he wrote a new movement for soprano solo and chorus as a final memorial to his mother. ("I will comfort you as one whom a mother comforts" reads the passage Brahms picked from the book of Isaiah.) *A German Requiem* was now finished, and, at the same time, the composer's international career had truly begun.

A word about Brahms's text. It is not the standard Requiem Mass, and Brahms tells us that in his seldom-read subtitle, *Ein deutsches Requiem, nach Worten der heiligen Schrift* (A German requiem, after words of the Holy Scriptures). Brahms had misgivings about the adjective *deutsches,* thinking that he might have more appropriately referred not to the language of his text, but to all mankind, whom he wished to embrace in this music. (Brahms was moved—and probably reassured—to learn years later that Schumann had planned a work with the same title.)

Brahms learned from his Second Serenade that by eliminating violins and giving the leading string material to the violas, he could sustain a deep, somber mood colored by dark, burnished hues, and that is how he begins *A German Requiem.* There are occasional flickers of sunlight in the flute lines and glistening harp arpeggios, but it's the weight of Brahms's grief we most remember. At first, each time the chorus sings, the orchestra stops playing, as if to listen, but soon the music from these two spheres—the richly resonant accompaniment and the pure, ethereal singing—merges. The music builds to a climax—marked a simple, restrained forte—and then gradually unravels while the harp, an instrument Brahms rarely used, ripples through F major triads.

The music Brahms saved from his early two-piano sonata now begins, fully orchestrated.



Although he wrote "Slow, moderate march" above the music, there are three beats to the measure, making it decidedly unmarchable; it has, instead, the quality of a slow dance of death. Midway through, Brahms grabs us by the shoulders when the chorus bursts in, singing "But the word of the Lord endures forever," and, embracing that thought, begins a forceful section of new fervor. At the mention of "pain and suffering," darkness passes over the music, pushing it into somber, unfamiliar places from which it will eventually emerge, armed with the sound of trumpets and horns. "Everlasting joy" is brilliant and fortissimo, but the ending is suddenly calm and reflective, confident in the newfound quiet strength of B-flat major.

The emphasis now changes. The baritone soloist addresses us directly, and the chorus repeats each verse after him. Eventually, both soloist and chorus urgently ask, "Now, Lord, how shall I find comfort?" over and over. The music slows; the winds linger over quiet chords of uncertainty. Then the voices of the chorus rise up in a slowly blossoming thought: "I hope in you." Now the organ sounds low D, joined by the double basses, contrabassoons, and tuba, and a

triumphant fugue builds above this solid ground. Brahms's symbolism is powerful, for throughout the elaborate wanderings of many independent instrumental and choral lines—even at moments of harmonic discord—the steadfast strength of the central tonality is unchallenged.

Music of consolation stands at the heart of Brahms's composition. The fourth movement is relatively modest in scale and intent, but it is no less attentive to the essence and the power of the text. The serene, benevolent phrases of the opening give way to new harmonic regions and a more urgent declamation at "Meine Seele verlanget" (My soul longs); the accompaniment is overcome by repeated stabs of pain at "mein Leib und Seele freuen" (My body and soul rejoice); and both orchestra and chorus let loose with a joyous double fugue of praise before the end.

The fifth movement is the one Brahms added after the Bremen premiere. The first voice we hear is that of the solo soprano—a new sound to our ears. The chorus enters, repeating a single line of text: "I will comfort you as one whom a mother comforts." The music sustains a single hushed mood, rising only once to a climax.

Next comes music of great breadth and dramatic power. The opening choral stanzas are cut short by the baritone solo: "Behold, I tell you a mystery." The chorus responds in hushed chords, and the baritone brings the music to a complete halt "in einem Augenblick" (in a moment). "For the trumpet shall sound" not only takes the obvious cue from the text, but adds a blaze of brass chords, surging strings, timpani rolls, and a flood of choral sound. The music reaches higher as the chorus repeatedly asks, "Death, where is your sting?" The sheer force of the cries is so urgent that the progress of the music is temporarily stalled. Finally, the altos break free with a triumphant new theme ("Lord, you are worthy") that launches an extraordinary fugue in both chorus and orchestra. Only Beethoven, among other nineteenth-century composers, could have conceived a fugue as magisterial, and only Handel among earlier figures might have matched the magnificent sweep of Brahms's music. (Brahms was the most historically astute of composers, a student and admirer of music written three hundred years before his time, and a serious collector of old music manuscripts.) Twice, as the chorus continues, the music strides upward five octaves from the low strings and tuba to the high trumpet and violins. Brahms's control, as he builds and then falls back, only to build again, is masterful.

The final movement begins with the great wingspread of an extended theme in F major, which slowly encompasses the whole chorus. After a gentle interlude in A major, and a return to the opening material, the word "Selig" triggers a flashback, and the music plunges unexpectedly into E-flat major and revives the opening chorus of the first movement. Finally we recover F major, and now the music of both movements merges so thoroughly that we can no longer tell one from the other. As the harp unfolds the notes of F major, the voices settle in octaves on F, in calm resolution. 𝒸

Phillip Huscher has been the program annotator for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra since 1987. His history of the Orchestra, Passing the Baton: The Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Music Directors Who Shaped Its Greatness, *has recently been published by The University of Chicago Press.*

A GERMAN REQUIEM

1. CHORUS

Selig sind, die da Leid tragen,
denn sie sollen getröstet werden.

—Matthew 5:4

Blessed are they who mourn,
for they shall be comforted.

Die mit Tränen säen,
werden mit Freuden ernten.
Sie gehen hin und weinen
und tragen edlen Samen,
und kommen mit Freuden
und bringen ihre Garben.

—Psalm 126:5–6

They who sow in tears
shall reap in joy.
They go forth and weep,
and carry precious seed,
and come again with joy,
and bring their sheaves with them.

2. CHORUS

Denn alles Fleisch, es ist wie Gras
und alle Herrlichkeit des Menschen
wie des Grases Blumen.
Das Gras ist verdorret und die Blume
abgefallen.

—I Peter 1:24

For all flesh is as grass,
and all the glory of man
is like the flower of the field.
The grass withers and the flower
falls.

So seid nun geduldig, lieben Brüder,
bis auf die Zukunft des Herrn.
Siehe, ein Ackermann wartet auf
die köstliche Frucht der Erde
und ist geduldig darüber,
bis er empfahe den Morgenregen
und Abendregen.

—James 5:7

So be patient, dear brothers,
until the coming of the Lord.
See how the farmer waits
for the precious fruit of the earth,
and is patient for it,
until he receives the spring rains
and the autumn rains.

Denn alles Fleisch, es ist wie Gras
und alle Herrlichkeit des Menschen
wie des Grases Blumen.
Das Gras ist verdorret und die Blume
abgefallen.
Aber des Herrn Wort bleibet in Ewigkeit.

—I Peter 1:24–25

For all flesh is as grass,
and all the glory of man
is like the flower of the field.
The grass withers and the flower
falls.
But the word of the Lord endures forever.

Die Erlöseten des Herrn werden wiederkommen
und gen Zion kommen mit Jauchzen;
ewige Freude wird über ihrem Haupte sein;
Freude und Wonne werden sie ergreifen,
und Schmerz und Seufzen wird weg müssen.

—Isaiah 35:10

The redeemed of the Lord shall return
and come to Zion with rejoicing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and pain and suffering shall fly away.

3. BARITONE AND CHORUS

Herr, lehre doch mich,
daß ein Ende mit mir haben muß,
und mein Leben ein Ziel hat,
und ich davon muß.
Siehe, meine Tage sind
einer Hand breit vor dir,
und mein Leben ist wie nichts vor dir.
Ach, wie gar nichts sind alle Menschen,
die doch so sicher leben.
Sie gehen daher wie ein Schemen,
und machen ihnen viel vergebliche Unruhe;
sie sammeln, und wissen nicht
wer es kriegen wird.
Nun, Herr, wes soll ich mich trösten?
Ich hoffe auf dich.

—Psalm 39:4–7

Lord, let me know
that I must have an end,
that my life has a term,
and that I must pass on.
See, my days are
as a hand's breadth before you,
and my life is as nothing before you.
Truly, all men who still walk the earth
are hardly as anything.
They go hence like a shadow
and all their noise comes to nothing.
They heap up their wealth but do not know
who will inherit it.
Now, Lord, how shall I find comfort?
I hope in you.

Der Gerechten Seelen sind
in Gottes Hand,
und keine Qual rühret sie an.

—Wisdom of Solomon 3:1

The souls of the righteous are
in the hands of God,
and no torment shall touch them.

4. CHORUS

Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen,
Herr Zebaoth!
Meine Seele verlanget und sehnet sich
nach den Vorhöfen des Herrn;
mein Leib und Seele freuen sich
in dem lebendigen Gott.
Wohl denen, die in deinem
Hause wohnen;
die loben dich immerdar.

—Psalm 84:1–2, 4

How lovely are your dwellings,
Lord of Sabaoth!
My soul longs and faints
for the courts of the Lord;
my body and soul rejoice
in the living God.
Blessed are they who dwell
in your house;
they praise you evermore.

5. SOPRANO AND CHORUS

Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit;
aber ich will euch wieder sehen
und euer Herz soll sich freuen,
und eure Freude soll niemand
von euch nehmen.

—John 16:22

You now have sorrow;
but I will see you again
and your heart shall rejoice,
and your joy no man shall take
from you.

Ich will euch trösten,
wie einen seine Mutter tröstet.

—Isaiah 66:13

Sehet mich an: ich habe eine kleine Zeit
Mühe und Arbeit gehabt
und habe großen Trost funden.

—Ecclesiasticus 51:35

I will comfort you
as one whom a mother comforts.

Look on me: for a short time
I have had sorrow and labor,
and have found great comfort.

6. BARITONE AND CHORUS

Denn wir haben hie keine bleibende Statt,
sondern die zukünftige suchen wir.

—Hebrews 13:14

Siehe, ich sage euch ein Geheimnis:
Wir werden nicht alle entschlafen,
wir werden aber alle verwandelt werden;
und dasselbige plötzlich, in einem Augenblick,
zu der Zeit der letzten Posaune.
Denn es wird die Posaune schallen,
und die Toten werden auferstehen unverweslich,
und wir werden verwandelt werden.
Dann wird erfüllet werden das Wort,
das geschrieben steht:
Der Tod ist verschlungen in den Sieg.
Tod, wo ist dein Stachel?
Hölle, wo ist dein Sieg?

—I Corinthians 15:51–52, 54–55

Herr, du bist würdig zu nehmen
Preis und Ehre und Kraft,
denn du hast alle Dinge geschaffen,
und durch deinen Willen haben sie
das Wesen und sind geschaffen.

—Revelation 4:11

For here we have no abiding city,
but we seek one to come.

Behold, I tell you a mystery:
We shall not all sleep,
but we shall all be changed,
and that quickly, in a moment,
at the last trumpet:
For the trumpet shall sound,
and the dead shall be raised incorruptible,
and we shall be changed.
Then shall be fulfilled the word
that is written:
Death is swallowed up in victory.
Death, where is your sting?
Hell, where is your victory?

Lord, you are worthy
to receive praise and glory and power,
for you have created all things,
and by your will were they created
and have their being.

7. CHORUS

Selig sind die Toten,
die in dem Herrn sterben, von nun an.
Ja, der Geist spricht,
daß sie ruhen von ihrer Arbeit;
denn ihre Werke folgen ihnen nach.

—Revelation 14:13

Blessed are the dead
who die in the Lord, from now on.
Yes, says the Spirit,
that they rest from their labors,
and their works follow after them.

Nikolaj Szeps-Znaider Conductor

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES
November 24 and 25, 2000, Orchestra Hall. Sibelius's Violin Concerto, Daniel Barenboim conducting

July 16, 2015, Ravinia Festival. Mozart's Violin Concerto no. 3 with Szeps-Znaider conducting from the violin and Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*

December 21, 22, and 23, 2017, Orchestra Hall. Beethoven's Violin Concerto with Szeps-Znaider conducting from the violin and Shostakovich's Symphony no. 5

MOST RECENT CSO PERFORMANCES
October 22, 24, and 25, 2026, Orchestra Hall. Nielsen's *Maskarade,* Dvořák's Cello Concerto with Jian Wang, and selections from Tchaikovsky's *The Sleeping Beauty*



The 2026–27 season marks Nikolaj Szeps-Znaider's seventh as music director of the Orchestre National de Lyon, a partnership that has been extended until 2028–29. This season, he and the orchestra present Strauss's *Elektra,* Messiaen's *Turangalîla-symphonie,* and Mahler's symphonies nos. 2 and 9.

Szeps-Znaider is regularly featured as guest conductor with the world's leading ensembles, including the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, and London Symphony Orchestra. His return to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra continues a flourishing relationship.

On the operatic front, following a successful debut conducting Mozart's *The Magic Flute* at the Dresden Semperoper, Szeps-Znaider was immediately re-invited to lead Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*. He also recently made debuts with the Royal Danish Opera, Bavarian State Opera, and the Zurich Opera House.

Also a virtuoso violinist, Szeps-Znaider maintains his reputation as one of the world's leading exponents of the instrument with a busy calendar of concerto and recital engagements. This season, he makes return appearances with the Cleveland Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, and Filarmonica della Scala in Milan.

Szeps-Znaider boasts an extensive discography of much of the core repertoire for violin, including a critically praised collection of Mozart's violin concertos with the London Symphony, which he directs from the violin. Other notable recordings include Nielsen's Violin Concerto with the New York Philharmonic and Alan Gilbert, Elgar's Concerto in B minor with the Dresden Staatskapelle and Sir Colin Davis, award-winning recordings of the concertos by Brahms and Korngold with the Vienna Philharmonic under Valery Gergiev, those by Beethoven and Mendelssohn with the Israel Philharmonic and Zubin Mehta, Prokofiev's Concerto no. 2 and Glazunov's Concerto in A minor with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and Mariss Jansons, and Mendelssohn's Concerto on DVD with the Gewandhaus Orchestra and Riccardo Chailly. Szeps-Znaider has also recorded all of Brahms's works for violin and piano with Yefim Bronfman.

He plays the 1741 "Kreisler" Guarnerius del Gesù instrument, on extended loan by the Royal Danish Theatre through the generosity of the VELUX Foundations, the Villum Foundation, and the Knud Hojgaard Foundation.

Nikolaj Szeps-Znaider is managed by Enticott Music Management in association with IMG Artists.

Photo by Lars Gundersen

Louise Alder Soprano

These concerts mark Louise Alder's debut with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.



British soprano Louise Alder has firmly established herself as a versatile artist, equally at home in the world's most important opera, concert, and recital venues, including London's Wigmore Hall, where she held an artistic residency in 2024, and Royal Albert Hall, where she appeared as the star soprano soloist at the Last Night of the BBC Proms in 2025, the first British soprano to perform at the event in over a decade.

Alder's 2026–27 season includes her role debut as Violetta in *La traviata* at the Glyndebourne Festival and returns to the Vienna State Opera as Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte,* the Bavarian State Opera in the title role of *Semele,* and *Così fan tutte* in a new production at the Royal Opera House (London). In concert, Alder makes company debuts with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Teatro di San Carlo in Naples, and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Further highlights include Fauré's Requiem with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Edward Gardner and scenes from Strauss's *Daphne* with the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra and Vladimir Jurowski. In recital, she reunites with tenor Mauro Peter and pianist Joseph Middleton for Wolf's *Italienisches Liederbuch* at Frankfurt Opera and with Middleton at Wigmore Hall, Oxford International Song Festival, and the Richmond Concert Society.

Last season's highlights include her house and role debut at the Metropolitan Opera in New York as Zdenka in *Arabella.*

Concert highlights include Strauss's Four Songs, op. 27 with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra; a tour of *Giulio Cesare* with the English Concert at London's Barbican Hall and across North America, culminating at Carnegie Hall in New York; *The Cunning Little Vixen* with the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia and Jakub Hrůša in Rome; the title role in *Theodora* at the BBC Proms and the Konzerthaus in Vienna with Arcangelo and Jonathan Cohen; and *Semele* on tour with the Monteverdi Choir and Sir John Eliot Gardiner.

An acclaimed recitalist, Alder joined Peter and Middleton for the *Italienisches Liederbuch* at Leeds Lieder, Wigmore Hall, and the Musikverein in Vienna. Further appearances include the LIFE Victoria Festival in Barcelona and the Oxford International Song Festival.

Her extensive discography includes *Chère Nuit: French Songs,* featuring works from Ravel to Yvain (Chandos); *The Russian Connection,* with songs by Rachmaninov, Sibelius, Tchaikovsky, Grieg, Medtner, and Britten (Chandos); *Through Life and Love* (Orchid Classics), an album of songs by Strauss, with Middleton; *Theodora* (Arcangelo/Alpha Classics); Lucia (*The Rape of Lucretia,* Opus Arte/Glyndebourne); and Silandra in Cesti's *L'Orontea* (OEHMS Classics/Frankfurt Opera).

Alder, a former ensemble member of Frankfurt Opera, studied at the Royal College of Music's International Opera School, where she was the inaugural Kiri Te Kanawa Scholar. She also is winner of the Young Singer Award at the 2017 International Opera Awards, the Dame Joan Sutherland Audience Prize at the 2017 Cardiff Singer of the World Competition and the inaugural 2015 Young British Soloists' Competition, and Glyndebourne's 2014 John Christie Award.

Louise Alder is represented by MWA worldwide.

Photo by Will Alder

Konstantin Krimmel Baritone

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES
December 12, 13, and 14, 2024, Orchestra Hall. Mahler's *Songs of a Wayfarer,* Fabien Gabel conducting



Konstantin Krimmel, of German Romanian descent, received his first musical training as a member of the St. George's Boys' Choir in Ulm. At the age of twenty-one, he began his vocal studies with Teru Yoshihara, graduating with distinction in 2020. Since then, he has been coached and mentored by Tobias Truniger in Munich. During his studies, the artist developed an affinity for the concert and song repertoire. Winning numerous competitions played a decisive role in advancing his career. From 2021 to 2023, he was supported as a BBC New Generation Artist. In 2023 he was named Young Artist of the Year at the Oper! Awards and received the Opernwelt Award for Young Singer of the Year, followed by the Opus Klassik Award for Singer of the Year in 2024.

Since 2021 Krimmel has been an ensemble member of the Bavarian State Opera, where he performs many of the key roles in his repertoire, such as Papageno in *The Magic Flute,* Harlequin in *Ariadne auf Naxos,* Figaro in *The Marriage of Figaro,* Don Giovanni, and Dandini in *La Cenerentola,* as well as Yoshio in Toshio Hosokawa's *Hanjo* and Matthias in Georg Friedrich Haas's *Thomas.* In the summer of 2024, he sang the role of Olivier in *Capriccio* under the baton of Christian Thielemann at the Salzburg Festival. In February 2027 he debuts as Papageno at London's Royal Opera House.

In concert, Konstantin Krimmel has worked with such renowned ensembles as the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, Vienna Philharmonic, Staatskapelle Berlin, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra Amsterdam, Bamberg Symphony, and the RIAS Chamber Choir.

Highlights of the 2026–27 season include Korngold's *Die tote Stadt* in concert with the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra under Oksana Lyniv in Amsterdam; Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra under Sir Simon Rattle in Munich and Passau; Handel's *Messiah* with the WDR Symphony Orchestra and Jonathan Cohen in Cologne; Bach's *Saint Matthew Passion* on tour with the RIAS Chamber Choir and the Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin under Justin Doyle; Schumann's *Das Paradies und die Peri* with the Spanish National Orchestra and Choir under David Afkham in Madrid; and Orff's *Carmina Burana* with the Bavarian Radio Symphony at the Rheingau Music Festival.

Art song is a central focus of Konstantin Krimmel's artistic work. Almost thirty song recitals take him to some of the world's leading centers, including the Konzerthaus in Vienna, the Royal Concertgebouw, Oxford Song Festival, Pierre Boulez Saal in Berlin, Beethoven-Haus Bonn, Hindsgavl Festival in Denmark, Munich Opera Festival, Schubertiade Hohenems/Schwarzenberg, the Schubertíada in Vilabertran, and Wigmore Hall.

Konstantin Krimmel's new album *Melancolie* (on which he sings in Romanian for the first time), recorded with pianist Ammiel Bushakevitz and released on the Alpha Classics label in August 2026, brings together songs by Brahms and Mandyczewski. Other recordings include *Mythos,* also with Bushakevitz, which, along with Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin* with Daniel Heide, received the German Record Critics' Award; *Silent Songs* and *For Clara,* both with pianist Hélène Grimaud; *Franz Liszt: Der du vom Himmel bist* with Heide; and *Zauberoper in Wien* with the Hofkapelle München under Rüdiger Lotter.

Photo © Geoffroy Schied

Chicago Symphony Chorus



The Chicago Symphony Chorus regularly performs with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in Orchestra Hall and at the Ravinia Festival.

The history of the Chorus began in 1957, when sixth music director Fritz Reiner invited Margaret Hillis to establish a chorus to equal the quality of the Orchestra. Hillis accepted the challenge, and the Chicago Symphony Chorus debuted in March and April 1958, in Mozart's Requiem under Bruno Walter and Verdi's Requiem under Reiner. Hillis served the Chorus for thirty-seven years. In 1994 ninth music director Daniel Barenboim appointed Duain Wolfe, who served as the Chorus's director and conductor until his retirement in 2022. Donald Palumbo was appointed as the Chorus's third director in 2025.

The Chorus first performed in Carnegie Hall in 1967 in Henze's *Muses of Sicily* and Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloe* under seventh music director Jean Martinon, and most recently in 2015 with Riccardo Muti for Scriabin's *Prometheus* and Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky*. Touring internationally with the Orchestra, the Chorus traveled to London and Salzburg in 1989 with Sir Georg Solti for performances of Berlioz's *The Damnation of Faust* and to Berlin in 1999 with Barenboim for Brahms's *A German Requiem* and Pierre Boulez for Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron*.

World premieres featuring the Chorus have included Ned Rorem's *Goodbye My Fancy,* John Harbison's Four Psalms, and Bernard Rands's *apókryphos*. With visiting orchestras, the Chorus has collaborated with the Berlin Philharmonic under Claudio Abbado, the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Seiji Ozawa, the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra with Zubin Mehta, and the Staatskapelle Berlin under Barenboim.

Since first recording commercially in 1959—Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* under Reiner—the Chorus has amassed a discography that includes hallmarks of the choral repertoire and several complete operas. The Chorus most recently received a 2010 Grammy Award for Best Choral Performance for Verdi's Requiem, led by Riccardo Muti on CSO Resound. The Chorus has received an additional nine Grammy awards for Best Choral Performance for Verdi's Requiem, Beethoven's *Missa solemnis,* Brahms's *A German Requiem,* Berlioz's *The Damnation of Faust,* Haydn's *Creation,* and Bach's Mass in B minor with Solti; Brahms's Requiem and Orff's *Carmina Burana* with James Levine; and Bartók's *Cantata profana* with Boulez.

The Chorus also has appeared on two movie soundtracks with the Orchestra: *Fantasia 2000* led by Levine, and John Williams's score for *Lincoln* conducted by the composer. Recordings on CSO Resound featuring the Chorus include Mahler's Second and Third symphonies, Poulenc's *Gloria,* and Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloe* under Bernard Haitink; and Berlioz's *Lélio,* Verdi's *Otello,* Schoenberg's *Kol Nidre,* choruses by Verdi and Boito's Prologue to *Mefistofele,* Shostakovich's Symphony no. 13 *(Babi Yar),* and most recently Mascagni's *Cavalleria rusticana* under Riccardo Muti.

Todd Rosenberg Photography

Donald Palumbo Chorus Director



Donald Palumbo was born in Rochester, New York, and received a bachelor of arts degree from Boston University. His career was launched in the 1980s at the Dallas Opera, where he served as assistant to Roberto Benaglio, the renowned Italian chorus master of Teatro alla Scala in Milan. Following a sixteen-year tenure as chorus director at the Lyric Opera of Chicago from 1991 to 2007, Palumbo assumed the same position at the Metropolitan Opera. There he was responsible for the Met Chorus's participation in more than twenty productions each season, and his work was honored with seven Grammy awards for Best Opera Recording. After stepping down from his position at the Met in June 2024, he returned to the theater in the following season to prepare the chorus in a new production of Verdi's *Aida*.

Palumbo's appointment as the third chorus director of the Chicago Symphony Chorus was announced in June 2025, and he began an initial three-year tenure on July 1, 2025. As director, he works with the Chorus each year to prepare multiple programs across the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's downtown season and the annual summer residency at the Ravinia Festival.

Palumbo was music director of the Chorus pro Musica of Boston and has also served as chorus master of the Canadian Opera Company, Dallas Opera, Banff School for the Arts Summer Opera Program, the Opera Company of Boston, and Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. In Europe, he has held chorus master positions at Opéra de Lyon, the Aix-en-Provence Festival, the Théâtre du Châtelet, and the Teatro Massimo in Palermo. From 1999 to 2001, Palumbo was chorus director of the Salzburg Festival, the first American to hold that position.

He has worked extensively at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, preparing the chorus for the Berlioz Festival in 1990—Requiem, *The Damnation of Faust, Romeo and Juliet*—and performances of Britten's *Peter Grimes* and Janáček's *Jenůfa.* Palumbo has conducted the Radio France Chorus in several a cappella choral concerts and prepared Britten's *War Requiem.*

Palumbo has been a vocal coach for the Apprentices of the Santa Fe Opera since 2014 and a faculty member of the Marcus Institute for Vocal Arts at the Juilliard School in New York since 2016.

In 2022 and 2023, Palumbo joined the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as guest chorus master for performances of Verdi's *Un ballo in maschera* and Beethoven's *Missa solemnis,* both works conducted by Riccardo Muti. Shortly after his appointment in June 2025, he was guest chorus master for performances of Verdi's Requiem, also led by Muti.

Since 2024 he has prepared the choral forces for concert performances of Puccini's *La bohème* and Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Yannick Nézet-Séguin, and in April 2027 he returns for Wagner's *Lohengrin*. In March 2025 he prepared the chorus for Verdi's *La traviata* staged in Kyoto and Tokyo for the Seiji Ozawa Music Academy.

Donald Palumbo returned to the Lyric Opera of Chicago in May 2025 to prepare and conduct a program of scenes with the artists of the Ryan Opera Center.

Todd Rosenberg Photography

Chicago Symphony Chorus

Donald Palumbo Director

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Laura Bumgardner
Anastasia Cameron Balmer
Katarzyna Dorula
Nida Grigalaviciute
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Margaret Quinnette
Alexia Rivera
Meaghan Smallwood

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Angela Born
Diane Busko Bryks
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The ensemble's history began in 1889, when Theodore Thomas, the leading conductor in America and a recognized music pioneer, was invited by Chicago businessman Charles Norman Fay to establish a symphony orchestra. Thomas's aim to build a permanent orchestra of the highest quality was realized at the first concerts in October 1891 in the Auditorium Theatre. Thomas served as music director until his death in January 1905, just three weeks after the dedication of Orchestra Hall, the Orchestra's permanent home designed by Daniel Burnham.

Frederick Stock, recruited by Thomas to the viola section in 1895, became assistant conductor in 1899 and succeeded the Orchestra's founder. His tenure lasted thirty-seven years, from 1905 to 1942. Stock founded the Civic Orchestra of Chicago—the first training orchestra in the U.S. affiliated with a major orchestra—in 1919, established youth auditions, organized the first subscription concerts especially for children, and began a series of popular concerts.

Three conductors headed the Orchestra during the following decade: Désiré Defauw was music director from 1943 to 1947, Artur Rodziński in 1947–48, and Rafael Kubelík from 1950 to 1953. The next ten years belonged to Fritz Reiner, whose recordings with the CSO are still considered hallmarks. Reiner invited Margaret Hillis to form the Chicago Symphony Chorus in 1957. For five seasons, from 1963 to 1968, Jean Martinon held the position of music director.

Sir Georg Solti, the Orchestra's eighth music director, served from 1969 until 1991. His arrival launched one of the most successful musical partnerships of our time. The CSO made its first overseas tour to Europe in 1971 under his direction and released numerous award-winning recordings. Beginning in 1991, Solti held the title of music director laureate and returned to conduct the Orchestra each season until his death in September 1997.

Daniel Barenboim became ninth music director in 1991, a position he held until 2006. His tenure was distinguished by the opening of Symphony Center in 1997, appearances with the Orchestra in the dual role of pianist and conductor, and twenty-one international tours. Appointed by Barenboim in 1994 as the Chorus's second director, Duain Wolfe served until his retirement in 2022.

In 2010 Riccardo Muti became the Orchestra's tenth music director. During his tenure, the Orchestra deepened its engagement with the Chicago community, collaborated with visionary musicians and composers, and realized many notable performances of operas in concert. In September 2023, Muti became music director emeritus for life.

In April 2024, conductor Klaus Mäkelä was announced as the Orchestra's eleventh music director and will begin an initial five-year tenure as Zell Music Director in September 2027. In July 2025, Donald Palumbo became the third director of the Chicago Symphony Chorus.

Carlo Maria Giulini was named the Orchestra's first principal guest conductor in 1969, serving until 1972; Claudio Abbado held the position from 1982 to 1985. Pierre Boulez was appointed as principal guest conductor in 1995 and was named Helen Regenstein Conductor Emeritus in 2006, a position he held until his death in January 2016. From 2006 to 2010, Bernard Haitink was the Orchestra's first principal conductor. Pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet is the Chicago Symphony artist-in-residence for the 2026–27 season.

The Orchestra first performed at Ravinia Park in 1905, later helped to inaugurate the Ravinia Festival in 1936, and has been in residence nearly every summer since. Listeners enjoy the weekly CSO Radio Broadcast series as well as releases from the ensemble's extensive commercial discography. Recordings by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus have earned sixty-five Grammy awards from the Recording Academy.

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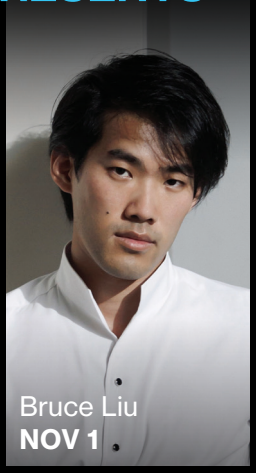
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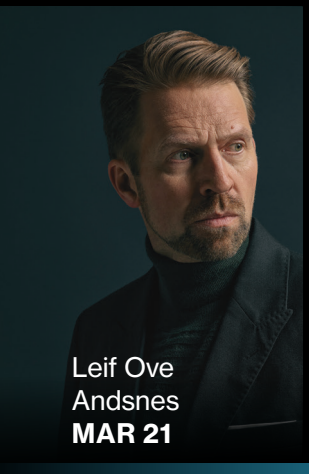






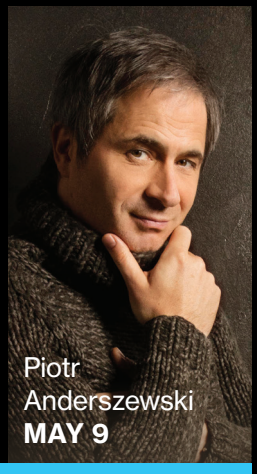
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