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FALL
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NOV 1 PIANO
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Nemanja Radulović & Double Sens

JAN 10 PIANO
Rudolf Buchbinder

FEB 4-7 ORCHESTRAL
Rana Plays Tchaikovsky
Featuring Beethoven's *Leonore* Overture

FEB 19-21 ORCHESTRAL
Karina Canellakis & Randall Goosby

MAR 11-14 ORCHESTRAL
Beethoven Violin Concerto & Mendelssohn

MAR 21 PIANO
Leif Ove Andsnes

MAR 24-27 ORCHESTRAL
Lang Lang Plays the Complete Beethoven Piano Concertos*

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Evgeny Kissin

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ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-SIXTH SEASON

Thursday, November 19, 2026, at 7:30
Friday, November 20, 2026, at 7:30
Saturday, November 21, 2026, at 7:30

Jaap van Zweden Conductor
Vadim Gluzman Violin

WOLFE — *Liberty Bell*

First Chicago Symphony Orchestra performances

PROKOFIEV — Violin Concerto No. 2 in G Minor, Op. 63
Allegro moderato
Andante assai
Allegro, ben marcato
VADIM GLUZMAN

INTERMISSION

RACHMANINOV — Symphony No. 2 in E Minor, Op. 27
Largo—Allegro moderato
Allegro molto
Adagio
Allegro vivace

The appearance of Jaap van Zweden is made possible by Lori Julian for the Julian Family Foundation.
The appearance of Vadim Gluzman is made possible by the Grainger Fund for Excellence.
Chicago Symphony acknowledges support from the Illinois Arts Council.

JULIA WOLFE

Born December 18, 1958; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Liberty Bell



When Julia Wolfe was awarded a MacArthur Fellowship—the so-called genius grant—in 2016, she was singled out as a composer "who combines influences from folk, classical, and rock genres in works that are grounded in historical and legendary narratives." The roots of Wolfe's musical makeup are indeed all over the map, beginning with her childhood fondness for playing showtunes from *Jesus Christ Superstar* and her adolescent attempts at writing songs in the Joni Mitchell mode. Moving on, she listened to Led Zeppelin, the Doors, and Aretha Franklin. Later, when she had settled into being a composer, she wrote *my lips from speaking* for six pianos, which is inspired by the opening riff of Franklin's "Think."

Wolfe had never intended to be a composer. At the University of Michigan, where she planned to study social sciences and politics, a friend urged her to drop by a course on creative musicianship. "I walked into this class," she later told NPR, "and I was fascinated about the idea of being able to make something with music, to build something. As a young woman, it felt very empowering." While working on a degree in composition at Michigan, she took a trip to New York City, where she met David Lang and Michael Gordon—he would become her husband—with whom she eventually founded the new-music collective Bang on a Can. (It was Wolfe who gave the group its title, after an earlier

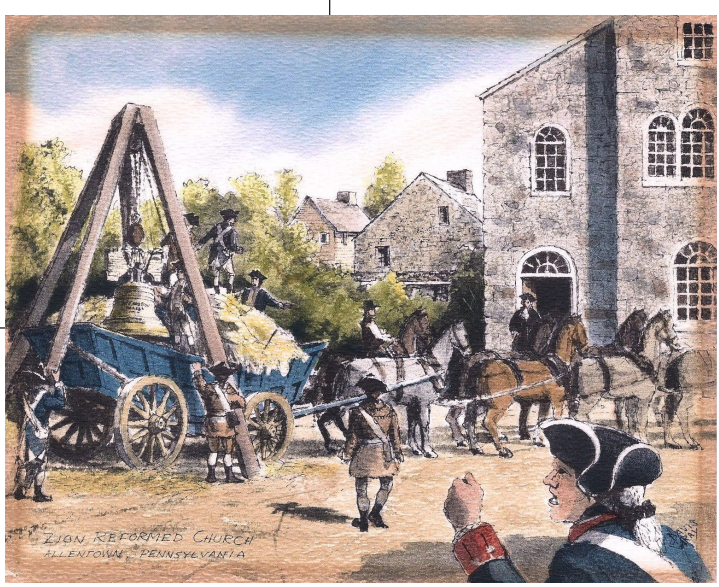
COMPOSED
2025

FIRST PERFORMANCE
September 19, 2025;
Houston, Texas

INSTRUMENTATION
2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons (2nd doubling contrabassoon), 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (glockenspiels, chimes, drum set, vibraphone, bell plates, bass drum, brake drum, thunder sheet, güiro), harp, piano, strings

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME
12 minutes

These are the first Chicago Symphony Orchestra performances.



THIS PAGE, FROM TOP: Julia Wolfe, portrait © Peter Serling

The Liberty Bell arrives at Zion's Reformed Church in Northampton Town (now Allentown), Pennsylvania, September 24, 1777. Watercolor attributed to Davis Gray (Ernest B. Walden, 1929–1995). Lehigh County Historical Society Collection, Allentown, Pennsylvania

poster billing them as "a bunch of composers banging on cans.") And on Gordon's advice, she also studied composition at Yale.

Although Wolfe's career as a composer initially lagged behind those of Gordon and Lang, she rapidly made up for lost time, finding her own highly individual voice—the one that drew the admiration of the MacArthur Foundation—bringing together all the strands of her musical upbringing. In 2009 Wolfe's *Steel Hammer,* a work inspired by the ballad of the African American folk hero John Henry, earned Wolfe a nomination for the Pulitzer Prize for Music. She won the Pulitzer six years later for *Anthracite Fields,* an oratorio commemorating the history of the coal miners in her native Pennsylvania that intermingles classical and folk music and packs several oral histories within its libretto. In January 2023 the Chicago Symphony performed *Her Story,* a forty-minute oratorio-like score for orchestra and women's vocal ensemble that is a commemoration of the Nineteenth Amendment. (In the *Wall Street Journal,* Tom Huizenga called Wolfe's big historical works "docu-torios.") Her short orchestral work *Liberty Bell,* composed last year on a commission from several orchestras and the Grant Park Music Festival, celebrates one of our most potent symbols of American democracy.

Julia Wolfe on *Liberty Bell*

I grew up in a small town north of Philadelphia. The image of the silent, cracked Liberty Bell is emblazoned in my memory. The bell, which arrived in Pennsylvania in the 1750s, was originally called the State House Bell and was later renamed Liberty Bell in the 1830s by New York and Boston abolitionists. The bell has stood, throughout time, as a symbol for liberty. The journey of the bell is storied. In its youth, it was carried off to Allentown, Pennsylvania, to prevent it from being melted down by the British for bullets. Later, the bell was salvaged from a rotting steeple in the State House, which was rebuilt and renamed Independence Hall sometime after the 1776 reading of the *Declaration of Independence.* The bell cracked at its first testing and was repaired. In 1843 it cracked further and was never able to fully ring again. Yet still, up until 1915, the bell made seven trips across the United States, carrying the message of its inscription throughout the country: "Proclaim LIBERTY Throughout all the Land unto all the Inhabitants thereof." (Leviticus 25:10)

My *Liberty Bell* is not silent. The more than a hundred musicians onstage are raucous and loud. Battles between independent rhythmic lines form a jagged composite whole. Metal chimes and pitched bell plates are struck to resonate and ring out. Obtaining liberty is not a quiet, tidy process. It is a messy, boisterous, ongoing, interlocking struggle. How can a piece of music embody and communicate the elusive reach for the most basic tenet of the founding of the country? The idea of liberty is everywhere—imprinted on coins, decorating postage stamps, declared in poetry and song, sprinkled through speeches. Music is my way of adding to the clamor. I shout out perseverance, grab tight to optimism, and search for a way forward. Taking the bell's inscription literally, "unto all the inhabitants thereof," the proclamation speaks to all who reach for the promise of liberty. *C*

ELECTRONIC DEVICES
Before the concert begins, mobile phones and other electronic devices must be turned off or set to silent mode. Please limit distractions and refrain from photography, audio and video recording, and using illuminated screens during the music.



SERGEI PROKOFIEV

Born April 23, 1891; Sontsovka, Ukraine
Died March 5, 1953; Moscow, Russia

Violin Concerto No. 2 in G Minor, Op. 63



Prokofiev wrote his first violin concerto shortly before he left Russia in 1918; the second concerto was composed seventeen years later, as he was preparing to return home. Why Prokofiev decided to go back has been variously attributed to patriotism, opportunism, nostalgia, and political naïveté. In the United States, he had initially enjoyed great success as an important new voice, particularly in Chicago, the first U.S. city to embrace his exceptional talents. But eventually, he found limited popularity and financial difficulty as a wandering pianist and composer in this country. In Paris, he was more successful and more comfortable, but he increasingly longed "to see real winters again, and spring that bursts into being from one moment to the next." In 1933 he concluded that "the air of foreign lands does not inspire me because I am Russian, and there is nothing more harmful to a man than to live in exile, to be in a spiritual climate incompatible with his race." Nearly all the music Prokofiev is remembered for was written in his homeland. And in 1933, he couldn't foresee the harm that would ultimately come to him under Joseph Stalin, who, in a coincidence no work of fiction would dare, died on the same day as Prokofiev in 1953.

Most of Prokofiev's celebrated Soviet contemporaries had either immigrated permanently, like Stravinsky and Nabokov, or stayed put, like Shostakovich and Pasternak. Prokofiev tried for the best of both worlds, although when he left Russia in May 1918, he expected to be back in a few months. But he found life outside his homeland too promising. Prokofiev received his first official invitation to return to Russia in 1923. He declined the offer, and the next year's as well. When he did return in 1927, for a three-month tour, he was greeted as a celebrity. The next years were a time of increasing frustration—Prokofiev recognized the urgent

COMPOSED
1935

FIRST PERFORMANCE
December 1, 1935; Madrid, Spain

INSTRUMENTATION
solo violin, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, bass drum, snare drum, triangle, cymbals, castanets, strings

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME
26 minutes

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES
April 1 and 2, 1943, Orchestra Hall. Patricia Travers as soloist, Hans Lange conducting

July 25, 1954, Ravinia Festival. Nina Geverts as soloist, Pierre Monteux conducting

MOST RECENT CSO PERFORMANCES
August 10, 2016, Ravinia Festival. Gil Shaham as soloist, David Zinman conducting

April 14 and 15, 2022, Orchestra Hall. Daniel Lozakovich as soloist, Klaus Mäkelä conducting

CSO RECORDINGS
1983. Shlomo Mintz as soloist, Claudio Abbado conducting. Deutsche Grammophon

1993. Itzhak Perlman as soloist, Daniel Barenboim conducting. Erato

THIS PAGE: Sergei Prokofiev, portrait by Sergei Yurievich Sudeykin (1882–1946), 1930s. Private collection. Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images | OPPOSITE PAGE: Plaque installed in 1992 at Madrid's Teatro Monumental, commemorating the December 1, 1935, premiere of Prokofiev's Second Violin Concerto

need to settle on both a compatible musical style and a home base. He decided to resume Soviet citizenship as early as 1932. (He didn't close his Paris apartment until 1936, however.) In 1934 he paved the way for his move by publicly addressing the question of "what kind of music should be written at the present time" in the Soviet Union. For Prokofiev, the solution rested on the abiding strength of melody—"simple and comprehensible, without being repetitive and trivial . . . . We must seek a new simplicity." It was a shrewd battle cry—both politically correct and consistent with Prokofiev's genuine beliefs.

The Second Violin Concerto was Prokofiev's last non-Soviet commission; it was written for the French Belgian violinist Robert Soetens. Prokofiev recalled:

> In 1935 a group of admirers [of Soetens] asked me to write a violin concerto for him, giving him exclusive rights to perform it for one year. I readily agreed, since I had been intending to write something for violin at that time and had accumulated some material. As in the case of the preceding concertos, I began by searching for an original title for the piece, such as "Concert Sonata for Violin and Orchestra," but I finally returned to the simplest solution: Concerto no. 2. Nevertheless, I wanted it to be altogether different from no. 1 in both content and style.

Prokofiev worked on the concerto at the same time as the ballet *Romeo and Juliet* during the summer of 1935; the two have much in common, particularly an ardent and voluptuous lyricism. The concerto was begun in Paris, continued in a number of hotel rooms, and completed in Russia, a reflection of Prokofiev's "nomadic concert-tour existence," as he put it, but also a reminder of how he straddled two worlds at the time.



The concerto begins with the solo violin playing an unaccompanied G minor melody, as if Prokofiev wished to establish from the outset the preeminence of melody and a new simplicity of language. The first movement, based on classical sonata form, is almost relentlessly lyrical; the essential drama of contrast comes only from the switch of key and mode to B major for the second theme. The second movement, in E-flat major, combines a light accompaniment, like the ticking of a clock, with a sweet and soaring melody in the violin. The mood is serene, disturbed only from time to time by more urgent and searching music. These roles are reversed at the very end, as the violin plays pizzicato triplets to the main tune, now low in the orchestra. In complete contrast, the finale is brash and athletic, with a rustic main theme that suggests peasants dancing and the unexpected use of castanets—a touch of local color that seems to predict that the world premiere would be given, on another of Prokofiev's whirlwind tours, in Madrid. *C*

SERGEI RACHMANINOV

Born April 1, 1873; Semyonovo, Russia
Died March 28, 1943; Beverly Hills, California

Symphony No. 2 in E Minor, Op. 27



It is astonishing that Rachmaninov ever wrote a second symphony. He was so shattered by the disastrous, ill-received premiere of his first symphony in 1897—"the most agonizing hour of my life," as he later put it—that, for the next three years, he suffered from chronic depression and struggled day after day with a composer's worst fear—the inability to write a page of music worth saving. Sketches for a new symphony were abandoned, and work on an opera, *Francesca da Rimini,* was shelved. Rachmaninov visited Leo Tolstoy, hoping that contact with the great, larger-than-life novelist would stimulate his creativity, but their conversations discouraged him even more. Finally, at his friends' insistence, in 1900 he went to see Dr. Nikolai Dahl, a psychiatrist noted for treating alcoholism through hypnosis. (Dahl also was an amateur violinist and a great music lover.) After four months of Dahl's hypnosis—"You will work with great facility" was one of the doctor's often-repeated leitmotifs—Rachmaninov suddenly recovered. He not only began to compose again—and with great facility—but he also soon finished the score that became his most popular work—the Second Piano Concerto, which he dedicated to Dahl. Rachmaninov played the piano solo at the triumphant premiere of the concerto in 1901, proving to the public that he had left his difficulties behind with the old century. The writer's block had been overcome, but if the piano concerto marked the turning point, it was his second symphony that proved his ultimate victory, as well as his vindication.

After the success of the concerto, Rachmaninov returned to composition on a regular basis (although he still made time for concert appearances both as pianist and as conductor—a new role he had taken up during his creative crisis). He now wrote steadily—piano pieces, songs, a cello sonata, and two operas, including the shelved *Francesca da Rimini.* By the fall of 1906, Rachmaninov was such a celebrity in his native land that, in order to escape the public eye, he moved, with his wife and infant daughter, to Dresden, chosen with no more reason than the memory of a fine performance of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* he had attended there. (He also liked being near Leipzig, the home

COMPOSED
October 1906–April 1907

FIRST PERFORMANCE
January 26, 1908; Saint Petersburg, Russia. The composer conducting

INSTRUMENTATION
3 flutes (3rd doubling piccolo), 3 oboes (3rd doubling english horn), 2 clarinets and bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, glockenspiel, bass drum, snare drum, cymbals, strings

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME
60 minutes

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES
November 3 and 4, 1911, Orchestra Hall. Frederick Stock conducting

July 24, 1937, Ravinia Festival. Hans Lange conducting

MOST RECENT CSO PERFORMANCES
July 20, 2016, Ravinia Festival. Vasily Petrenko conducting

May 11, 12, 13, and 16, 2023, Orchestra Hall. Riccardo Muti conducting

THIS PAGE: Sergei Rachmaninov, drawing by Dresden-based artist Robert Sterl (1867–1932), 1909

OPPOSITE PAGE: The Imperial Mariinsky Theatre, Saint Petersburg, Russia, where Rachmaninov conducted the premiere of his Second Symphony. Postcard, 1900s



of his favorite conductor, Arthur Nikisch, and the celebrated Gewandhaus Orchestra.)

In Dresden, where he once again became a full-time composer, Rachmaninov at last began to sketch a new symphony, with sudden difficulty and in total secrecy—obviously he had not banished the painful memories of his first. Finally, in February 1907, when word of his newest project leaked out in the German press, he confessed to a friend, "I have composed a symphony. It's true! . . . I finished it a month ago and immediately put it aside. It was a severe worry to me, and I am not going to think about it anymore." But by the summer he was back at work, polishing the symphony for its public unveiling. Rachmaninov conducted the work at the Saint Petersburg premiere in January 1908, with great, reassuring success. The symphony won the Glinka Prize of 1,000 rubles that year and quickly made the rounds of the major orchestras of the world. (It was performed in Chicago for the first time in 1911.)

But Rachmaninov's vindication was a qualified one, for wherever the symphony was performed, except under the composer's own baton, it was so extensively cut that this almost hour-long symphony was sometimes reduced to a mere forty-five minutes. Few other major works of orchestral music, including Bruckner's most misunderstood symphonies, were regularly presented to the public in such a savagely butchered state. These traditional cuts (the New York Philharmonic has kept a list of twenty-nine cuts supposedly approved by the composer) range from tiny, but still disfiguring snips—a measure or two of introductory accompaniment, for example—to major surgery, such as the removal of the main theme from the recapitulation of the Adagio. The true stature of Rachmaninov's Second Symphony was largely unsuspected. Ironically, a score that was routinely cut because its material was considered too insubstantial to sustain its length ended up sounding even more inconsequential, with its balance skewed and its forward sweep blunted. Only in recent years, when conductors have begun to play the piece in its entirety, has Rachmaninov's true achievement as a composer been revealed.

Throughout Rachmaninov's life, it was fashionable—if not in fact honorable in

progressive music circles—to disparage his music. Rachmaninov had always worried that by splitting his time among playing the piano, conducting, and composing, he had spread himself too thin. "I have chased three hares," he once said. "Can I be certain that I have captured one?" For many years, Rachmaninov's stature as a pianist was undisputed. (He regularly performed with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, beginning in 1909, when he played his Second Piano Concerto here during his first American tour; he appeared with the Orchestra for the last time in 1943, just six weeks before his death, as the soloist in Beethoven's First Piano Concerto and his own Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini.)

But by the time of his death in 1943, he had been written off as an old-fashioned composer—hopelessly sentimental, out-of-touch, and irrelevant. As Virgil Thomson told the young playwright Edward Albee in 1948, "It is really extraordinary, after all, that a composer so famous should have enjoyed so little the esteem of his fellow composers." (Rachmaninov's great Russian contemporary, Igor Stravinsky, for example, never could stomach the music or the man, even when they were neighbors in Los Angeles. "A six-foot scowl," was his summation of his famously grim-faced colleague.) The sacrosanct *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians,* in its fifth edition, concluded its dismal appraisal of his output: "The enormous popular success some few of Rachmaninov's works had in his lifetime is not likely to last and musicians never regarded it with much favor." But in recent years, his star has been on the rise. Now, as Rachmaninov always hoped, it is his music and not his piano playing that keeps his name alive.

Even Rachmaninov eventually admitted that his first symphony was in fact a "weak, childish, strained, and bombastic" work—words no more sympathetic than those of César Cui's devastating opening-night review. (Cui suggested that Rachmaninov's music sprang straight from a conservatory in hell.) The new symphony proves how seriously Rachmaninov took the challenges of the form the second time around. The first movement is quite long, but it only demonstrates Rachmaninov's command of extended paragraphs and his mastery of carefully controlled suspense. As a conscious effort to unify the entire work, Rachmaninov begins quietly and slowly, with a low string "motto" theme that reappears, already disguised, as early as the main violin melody that takes over once the tempo picks up.

The second movement is a very lively, brilliantly orchestrated scherzo that unexpectedly makes way for a broad, lyrical melody of characteristic lushness. The trio midsection begins with a fugue launched by the second violins. After the return of the scherzo, Rachmaninov introduces the same Dies irae chant melody that he also cites in his Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini and *The Isle of the Dead.*

The Adagio opens with a lovely, sighing violin gesture—it would sustain an entire movement for many a romantic composer—that Rachmaninov quickly pushes aside for a generous, long-breathed clarinet melody. (It unfolds slowly, circling, but never repeating itself, for some twenty-two measures.) At the end, the clarinet and violins exchange roles.

The finale begins with festive, dancing music; continues with a big theme destined to return, triumphantly, at the end; and even stops, for just six measures, to reconsider the melody from the slow movement. The development section crests with an astonishing passage of descending scales, cascading at different speeds and from different heights, like the clangorous pealing of bells. And the big melody, one of Rachmaninov's finest, does not disappoint, but returns, in octaves, to sweep in the final cadences. **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.*

Jaap van Zweden Conductor

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES
October 9, 10, 11, and 14, 2008, Orchestra Hall. Bruckner's Symphony no. 5

July 7, 2012, Ravinia Festival. Mahler's Symphony no. 6

MOST RECENT CSO PERFORMANCES
February 12, 14, and 15, 2026, Orchestra Hall; February 13, 2026, Edman Memorial Chapel, Wheaton. Thompson's *To See the Sky,* Bruch's Violin Concerto no. 1 with Himari, and Mozart's Symphony no. 41



World renowned conductor Jaap van Zweden's artistic mastery has served him and the orchestras he has led, among them his recent past music directorships: the New York Philharmonic, where he championed the transformation of David Geffen Hall and, in 2022, inaugurated the renovated venue; the Hong Kong Philharmonic, which he led to international prominence; and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, which earned national acclaim under his direction.

He has been music director of the Seoul Philharmonic since 2024, and he began his tenure as music director of the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France in the fall of 2026, following a season as music director designate, which culminated in the orchestra's tour of Asia and a concert performance of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* at the Festival Radio France in Montpellier. Since 2025 Jaap van Zweden has been affiliated with Taiwan's Evergreen Symphony Orchestra, first as artist-in-residence and now principal conductor, starting in January 2027.

His 2026–27 schedule with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France and Seoul Philharmonic includes separate tours to major European concert halls and returns as guest to the San Francisco Symphony and Antwerp Symphony Orchestra. Jaap van Zweden has also appeared as guest with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra Amsterdam, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Staatskapelle Berlin, Orchestre de Paris, Vienna Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, London Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Among Jaap van Zweden's over fifty recordings is the Hong Kong Philharmonic in first-ever performances in Hong Kong of Wagner's *Ring* cycle, released on the Naxos label. To this is added the New York Philharmonic's recordings of the world premiere of David Lang's *prisoner of the state* (2020) and Julia Wolfe's Grammy Award–nominated *Fire in my mouth* (2019), both released on the Decca Gold label. In addition, his acclaimed performances of *Lohengrin, Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg,* and *Parsifal* (which won the prestigious Edison Award for Best Opera Recording in 2012) are available on CD and DVD.

Born in Amsterdam, Jaap van Zweden, at nineteen, while still a student at the Juilliard School in New York, was appointed the youngest-ever concertmaster of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, and he began his conducting career in 1996. In 2023 he received the Concertgebouw Prize for exceptional contributions to the organization's artistic profile.

He remains conductor emeritus of the Antwerp Symphony and honorary chief conductor of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, where he was chief conductor (2005–13); he also served as chief conductor of the Royal Flanders Orchestra (2008–11) and music director of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra (2008–18) and the New York Philharmonic (2018–24). Under his leadership, the Hong Kong Philharmonic (2012–24) was named *Gramophone*'s Orchestra of the Year in 2019. Van Zweden was named *Musical America*'s 2012 Conductor of the Year and was the subject of a CBS *60 Minutes* profile in 2018.

In 1997 Jaap van Zweden and his wife, Aaltje, established the Papageno Foundation to support families of children with autism. Today, almost thirty years later, the foundation has grown into a multifaceted organization that focuses on the development of children and young adults with autism. In addition to in-home music therapy through a national network of qualified music therapists in the Netherlands, the foundation has opened several Papageno houses, where young adults with autism can live, work, and participate in the community.

Photo by Brad Trent

Vadim Gluzman Violin

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCE
November 3, 1997, Orchestra Hall. Ravel's *Tzigane,* Christopher Wilkins conducting

MOST RECENT CSO PERFORMANCES
June 1, 2, 3, and 6, 2023, Orchestra Hall. Shostakovich's Violin Concerto no. 1, David Afkham conducting



Universally recognized among today's top performing artists, Vadim Gluzman breathes new life and passion into the golden era of the violin tradition of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Gluzman's wide repertoire embraces new music, and his performances are heard around the world through livestreams, broadcasts, and a striking catalog of award-winning recordings on the BIS, Platoon, and EuroArts labels.

The Israeli violinist appears with the world's leading orchestras and conductors, including the Berlin Philharmonic with Tugan Sokhiev, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, and Orchestre de Paris; Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the London Philharmonic with Neeme Järvi; Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra Amsterdam and the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra with Riccardo Chailly; Gothenburg Symphony and Philharmonia Orchestra with Santtu-Matias Rouvali; and the Cleveland Orchestra under the batons of Hannu Lintu and Michail Jurowski. He also appears at festivals including Ravinia, Tanglewood, BBC Proms, Grant Park, and the North Shore Chamber Music Festival, which he founded in 2011.

In the 2026–27 season, Vadim Gluzman makes his highly anticipated debut with the New York Philharmonic under the baton of Santtu-Matias Rouvali and performs with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Dresden Philharmonic, and the Baltimore, Indianapolis, Colorado, and Quebec symphony orchestras. He appears in recital at Leipzig's Gewandhaus and continues to lead performances with the ProMusica Chamber Orchestra in Columbus, Ohio, where he serves as a creative partner and principal guest artist.

Gluzman has premiered works by Sofia Gubaidulina, Erkki-Sven Tüür, Moritz Eggert, Giya Kancheli, Elena Firsova, Pēteris Vasks, Michael Daugherty, and Lera Auerbach. In 2025 he began his role as artistic director of the Music in the Mountains Festival in Durango, Colorado.

Accolades for Gluzman's extensive discography include the Diapason d'Or of the Year, *Gramophone*'s Editor's Choice, *Classica* magazine's Choc de Classica Award, and disc of the month by *The Strad, BBC Music Magazine,* and *Classic FM*.

Distinguished artist in residence at the Peabody Conservatory, where he teaches a selected group of young violinists, Vadim Gluzman performs on the legendary 1690 "ex-Leopold Auer" Stradivari violin, on extended loan through the Stradivari Society of Chicago.

Photo by Marco Borggreve

CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Chicago Symphony gratefully acknowledges the **Sally Mead Hands Foundation, Irving Harris Foundation, Lori Julian for the Julian Family Foundation,** and **Margo and Michael Oberman** for providing support of the presentation of contemporary music for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's 2026–27 season.

Championing music of our time remains a vital thread in Chicago Symphony's history. Through this generous support, we continue this commitment to new music that compels audiences today and are proud to celebrate this tradition throughout the 2026–27 concert season by featuring innovative contemporary works.

October 15–17
ROBERTO SIERRA *Fandangos*
ARTURO MÁRQUEZ *Fandango* for violin and orchestra

November 19–21
JULIA WOLFE *Liberty Bell*

February 25–27
MASON BATES *The Escapist Symphony*
WORLD PREMIERE

March 4–6
ARVO PÄRT *Summa*

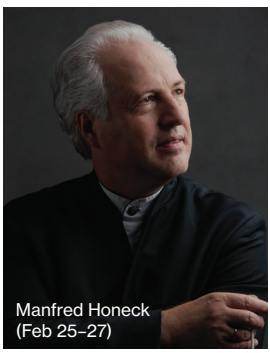
April 22–24
MICHAEL ABELS *More Seasons*

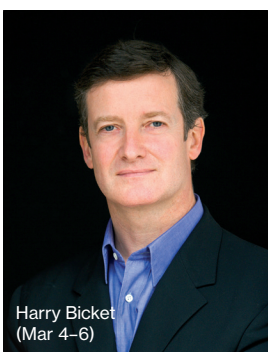
May 20–22
TAN DUN Passacaglia: *Secret of Wind and Birds*
TAN DUN *Water* Concerto
TAN DUN Concerto for Orchestra from *Marco Polo*

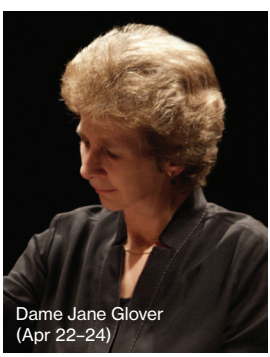
May 27–28
ESA-PEKKA SALONEN *Tiu* (Revised Version)

June 3–6
PHILIP GLASS *The Light*

June 17–20
PIERRE BOULEZ *Le soleil des eaux*


Manfred Honeck
(Feb 25–27)


Harry Bicket
(Mar 4–6)


Dame Jane Glover
(Apr 22–24)

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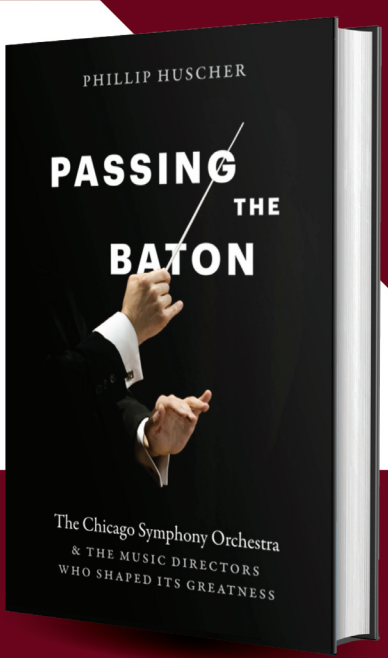
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In ***Passing the Baton: The Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Music Directors Who Shaped Its Greatness***, longtime CSO program annotator Phillip Huscher traces the Orchestra's remarkable history through the music directors who helped build, challenge and transform the ensemble — from its founding years to the modern eras of Fritz Reiner, Sir Georg Solti, Riccardo Muti and beyond.



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CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Now in its 136th season, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra is a global artistic leader, hailed as one of the most esteemed ensembles in classical music.

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.

The musicians of the Orchestra are deeply involved in the Chicago Symphony Negaunee Music Institute, which reaches students, families, and early-career musicians through free and low-cost programming and world-class training.

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Chicago Symphony Orchestra

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Qing Hou
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Sando Shia
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Rong-Yan Tang

Baird Dodge Principal
Danny Yehun Jin
Assistant Principal
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Ni Mei
Hermine Gagné
Rachel Goldstein
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Jasmine Mengjia Lin
Wendy Koons Meir
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The Paul Hindemith Principal Viola Chair
Catherine Brubaker ‡
Youming Chen
Sunghee Choi
Paolo Dara
Wei-Ting Kuo
Danny Lai
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Lawrence Neuman
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Kenneth Olsen
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ENGLISH HORN

Scott Hostetler

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Principal
John Bruce Yeh
Assistant Principal
The Governing Members Chair
Gregory Smith
Pavel Vinnitsky

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John Bruce Yeh

BASS CLARINET

Pavel Vinnitsky

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William Buchman
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BASS TROMBONE

Charles Vernon

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The Louise H. Benton Wagner and Erika and Dietrich M. Gross Principal Flute chairs are currently unoccupied.

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Assistant Conductor position is sponsored by the Solti Foundation U.S.

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra string sections utilize revolving seating. Players behind the first desk (first two desks in the violins) change seats systematically every two weeks and are listed alphabetically. Section percussionists also are listed alphabetically.

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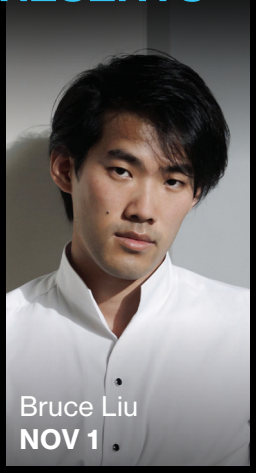
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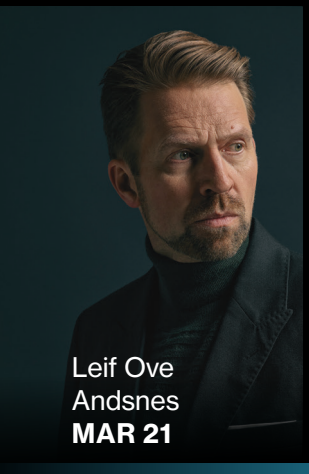






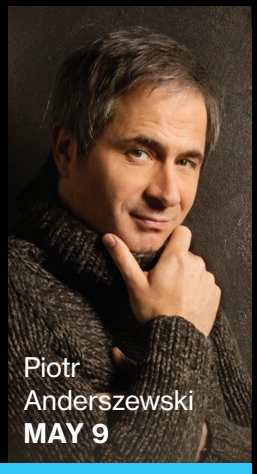
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