Music's power to connect shines in Chicago Sinfonietta's 2023-24 season

First season in new Chicago home - the Auditorium Theatre

Composer Peter Cottontale joins as Sinfonietta's second Artist-in-Residence

Chicago Premieres, including one co-commission

Expanded community programs extend local reach

Technology plays a larger part in forward momentum

Nationally recognized "Pay What You Can" program enters third season

Chicago, IL - Chicago Sinfonietta (CS) revealed its 36th anniversary season today at the final concerts of the 2022-23 season. RESONATE is about the diverse, intriguing facets of sound and the power it has to connect people. Creativity, exploration, a nod to technology, premieres, a co-commission and the exciting juxtapositions of new and established musical ideas come together in a glorious, colorful soundscape that expands and amplifies the role of symphonic music in the 21st century.

"The 2023-24 season is all about connecting to the world - and each other - through sound. It's about music that resonates - and frequencies that speak to us on a personal and global level - about culture, community, life, and yes - technology," stated Music Director Mei-Ann Chen. "Performing in our new home this season - the Chicago landmark Auditorium Theatre, and continuing in Naperville's Wentz Concert Hall, we've dared to put our finger on the pulse of classical music - both today's and yesterday's- with a carefully curated accessible season featuring works by women composers, BIPOC composers, and leading
exponents of Romantic and Modern genres. As always, we perform premieres this season, with one a Chicago Sinfonietta co-commission by Chicagoan Clarice Assad.

"We have incredible guest artists with us this season. We are excited to have Peter Cottontale as our second Artist-in-Residence! His work with us is sure to further our creativity in the areas of collaboration and ever-growing relationships between artists and audiences. Guest conductors Carlos Miguel Prieto and Chelsea Tipton, double bassist Xavier Foley, violinist Amaryn Olmeda, vocalist / composer Clarice Assad, Chicago Sinfonietta percussionists and percussionist Cleo Goldberg, and pianist George Li all appear on our 2023-24 season.

"Music has a power all its own. Welcome to RESONATE. We hope you'll join us - it's going to be a sound adventure you won't forget!"

Stated President and Chief Executive Officer Blake-Anthony Johnson. "We welcome you to explore our 36th season. An adventurous creator of community, shared experiences, and inspiration, Chicago Sinfonietta continues to lead the industry in areas of accessibility, diversity, equity, and inclusion. RESONATE is a thrilling step forward in the presentation of classical music, and shines a light on what is next in our future. We continue to embrace and explore new ways of presenting music and engaging both new and established audiences. Our recent 35th anniversary season marked our full return to activities in-person, and launched the start of an extensive long-range vision Chicago Sinfonietta will be unveiling over the coming seasons as America's laboratory and model for the field of classical music. Versatility and an openness to new ideas is key in our plans. Our education and community programs continue to grow, deepening our commitment to building our community. Our acclaimed Freeman Fellowship program continues to launch careers in the musician, composer, conductor, and administrator fields, with conducting fellows recently placed in posts with such renowned orchestras as the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, and Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra.

The 36th season reverberates with creativity, forward momentum and innovative soundscapes. And so, we invite you to find your frequency. Join us and see what resonates with you."

Details on the season follow below.

**Chicago Sinfonietta**
**36th Season**
**2023-2024**
*(Subject to change)*

AMPLIFY Opening Night (Subscription Concert 1)
Chicago Sinfonietta’s 36th season opens with AMPLIFY, an exhilarating program celebrating music’s universal ability to connect us through the beauty of sound with an exciting mix of two contemporary pieces and a warhorse. The concert begins with the Chicago Premiere of Grammy-nominated native Chicagoan Regina Harris Baiocchi’s thrilling multicultural soundscape Muse for Orchestra, which references the muses that inspire each of us. Merging past with the present is Re(new)al, a work that highlights Vietnamese American composer Viet Cuong’s “tremendous respect for renewable energy initiatives and the commitment to creating a new, better reality for us all.” Chicago Sinfonietta’s percussionists are joined by percussionist Cleo Goldberg in a quartet for this fascinating orchestral work featuring unusual instruments including compressed air cans. Closing the concert is Mahler’s popular and powerful European warhorse, the Symphony No. 1 in D Major, a timeless interweaving of pre-existing and modern ideas.

SOUNDSCAPE
Chicago Sinfonietta’s Annual Gala
OCTOBER 28, 2023 | HOTEL FAIRMONT MILLENIUM PARK

Join Chicago Sinfonietta for an unforgettable evening and one of Chicago's social events of the season! Celebrating 36 years of groundbreaking innovation in the field of classical music, this popular annual event supports Chicago Sinfonietta’s artistic and educational initiatives. Check the website for tickets when they go on sale.

DEPTH (Subscription Concert 2)
NOVEMBER 4, 2023 AT 7:30 PM | WENTZ CONCERT HALL
NOVEMBER 5, 2023 AT 7:30 PM | AUDITORIUM THEATRE
Carlos Miguel Prieto, Guest Conductor
Carlos CHAVEZ Sinfonia India
Juan Pablo CONTRERAS Mariachitlán (Chicago Premiere)
Dmitri SHOSTAKOVICH Symphony No. 5

Join us for a deep exploration of the human spirit through music. Music's beauty, and ability to create profound connections is on display in the second concert of the season led by Mexican guest conductor Carlos Miguel Prieto. First is Carlos Chavez’s vibrant Sinfonia India, a fusion of Western Classical form, Mexican folk music and modern creativity, that pays tribute to native Mexican music. Audiences
are in for an unforgettable experience with Juan Pablo Contreras’ award winning *Mariachitlán*, described by the composer as “an orchestral homage to my birthplace… …. Traditional rhythms … accompany original melodies inspired by the beautiful landscapes of Jalisco.” Closing the evening is Shostakovich’s dramatic and courageous work of rebellion under the oppressive Soviet regime, the powerful Symphony No. 5, Op. 47, in D Minor.

**HOLIDAYS OF LIGHT (Special Concert)**

**DECEMBER 15, 2023 AT 7:30 PM | AUDITORIUM THEATRE**

Chelsea Tipton, Guest Conductor

Holiday spirit abounds in this special evening featuring works from holidays around the world. Including: Robert WENDEL Christmas Ala Valse; Irving BERLIN White Christmas; Alexander GLAZUNOV Chopiniana Suite Op. 46; Lukas RICHMAN Hanukkah Festival Overture; Duke ELLINGTON Nutcracker Suite; James PIERPONT Jingle Bells Forever; Felix BERNARD Winter Wonderland; Percy GRAINGER Irish Tune from County Derry; Jerry LOVRIEN Minor Alterations; Feliz Navidad - arranged Victor A. VANACORE; Johann STRAUSS Champagne Polka; Eric HOLCOMBE Fantasy on Auld Lang Syne; Leroy ANDERSON Sleigh Ride.

Luminarias light up the hall for the closing work of the evening - an audience participation unaccompanied rendition of Silent Night featuring one verse in Spanish.

**PULSE MLK TRIBUTE CONCERT (Subscription Concert 3)**

**JANUARY 14, 2024 AT 3:00 PM | WENTZ CONCERT HALL**

**JANUARY 15, 2024 AT 7:30 PM | AUDITORIUM THEATRE**

Mei-Ann Chen, conductor

Scott JOPLIN (orch. Gunther Schuller) Overture from Treemonisha

Xavier Dubois FOLEY “Victory” Concerto

Xavier Foley, double bassist

Margaret BONDS Montgomery Variations

Chicago Sinfonietta’s popular annual Martin Luther King Tribute concert sets the pulse of hope, perseverance and progress. Kicking off the celebration is the exciting and expressive Overture from Scott Joplin’s Pulitzer Prize winning Treemonisha orchestrated by Gunther Schuller. A celebration of African American music and culture, it is the only extant opera about the African American experience during the Reconstruction Era composed by a Black man. Avery Fisher Grant recipient and Sphinx Competition winner Xavier Foley’s “Victory” Concerto is performed by the crowd-pleasing composer / double bassist himself. The concert closes with the enthralling Montgomery Variations by Chicagoan Margaret Bond, composed as a tribute to Dr. King following her 1963 visit to the Alabama town, and celebrating the perseverance of Black Americans in the face of adversity.
ECHOCelebrating Women’s History Month (Subscription Concert 4)
MARCH 15, 2024 AT 7:30 PM | WENTZ CONCERT HALL
MARCH 16, 2024 AT 7:30 PM | AUDITORIUM THEATRE
Mei-Ann Chen, conductor
Florence PRICE Concert Overture No. 2 (Chicago Premiere)
Samuel BARBER Violin Concerto
Amaryn Olmeda, violinist (Chicago Debut)
Clarice ASSAD Co-Commission with SPCO/ROCO/ACO (Not Yet Titled) (Illinois Premiere)
Clarice Assad, vocalist
Francis POULENCC Les biches (The Does) Suite (CS Premiere)

Technology and Music merge in this powerful concert highlighting the creativity and artistry of women composers and their inspirational works. Featuring three Chicago premieres, this concert honoring Women’s History Month begins with a piece by Sinfonietta favorite composer Florence Price - her Concert Overture No. 2. Based on three spirituals, the work highlights her masterful musical voice. Providing counterpoint, Samuel Barber’s rich, deep, neo-romantic voice is heard in his beloved Violin Concerto performed by one-to-watch violinist Amaryn Olmeda in her Chicago debut. Chicago Sinfonietta’s highly anticipated premiere of its co-commission with SPCO / ROCO / ACO (currently untitled) by internationally acclaimed Chicagoan Clarice Assad is next - this new work centering on Artificial Intelligence offers innovative sounds by one of today’s celebrated multi-faceted female artists. Evocatively merging elements of neoclassical and jazz, Francis Poulenc’s playful Les biches Suite closes the concert.

REVERB (Subscription Concert 5)
MAY 10, 2024 AT 7:30 PM | WENTZ CONCERT HALL
MAY 11, 2024 AT 7:30 PM | AUDITORIUM THEATRE
Mei-Ann Chen, conductor
Unsuk CHIN Subito con Forza (for orchestra)
Louise FARRENC Symphony No. 3
Carlos SIMON Profiles
Sergei RACHMANINOFF Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini
George Li, pianist

Chicago Sinfonietta reverberates with dynamic sound and energy as closes its 2023-24 subscription series with an evening of energizing music. Dynamism permeates the evening, beginning with Unsuk Chin’s energetic curtain-raiser, Subito con Forza, followed by Louise Farrenc’s bold and powerful Symphony No. 3 with its intense opening and triumphant finale. The passion continues with Carlos Simon’s Profiles, an energetic, colorful work inspired by the work of the late visual artist Romare Bearden. The piece, writes the composer, ”aims to highlight the rich energy and joyous sceneries that Harlem expressed as it was the hotbed for African American culture.” The final, evergreen work of the season is no less
than the rock star of the 18th century, Rachmaninoff’s Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, with internationally renowned pianist George Li.

**TICKETS**

**Concert subscriptions start at just $100**

Subscribers enjoy a 25% discount along with the best seats available, and have the option to keep specific seats year to year, have priority upgrades, the ability to bring a friend for FREE to one concert during the season, as well as free exchanges, free ticket reprint services, and 20% off additional single tickets for all concerts. Groups of 10 or more are eligible for up to 30% off single tickets—all year, for all concerts. Tickets may be purchased online at: chicagosinfonietta.org/36th or by calling the Box Office at: (312) 284-1554.

Chicago Sinfonietta will hold an open house and offer subscription discounts at the Auditorium Theatre on June 5th from 3:00–7:00 PM (50% discount) and September 7th from 3:00–7:00 PM (40% discount). An exclusive opportunity for a sneak peek of Sinfonietta’s beautiful new venue, allowing for a preview of the seating, and selecting subscription spots. Special behind-the-scenes tours of the historic theatre will also be available. More information can be found on the website.

**Pay What You Can Program**

Making classical music accessible to all is a central part of Chicago Sinfonietta’s mission. Now in its third season, CS offers the nationally recognized *Pay What You Can* (PWYC) program, a frontrunner in the field, inspiring other organizations to adopt this practice. Patrons can pay what they choose for a concert ticket, with prices starting at $5.

**EDUCATION, COMMUNITY and PUBLIC PROGRAMS**

Chicago Sinfonietta’s education, community and public initiatives offer a large menu of performance, services and cultural engagement. *MakingMUSIC*, a three-tiered series of programs designed for 4th through 8th grade introduces basic classical music concepts and builds composition and performance skills; *ENCORE* provides mentorship and instruction to high school students who are interested in continuing their music education at a higher level through workshops and master classes led by Chicago Sinfonietta teacher musicians in individualized small ensemble settings.

*Sinfonietta@CPL* continues to offer performance and music lectures throughout the school year in collaboration with the Chicago Public Library; *Melodic Lounge*, a cafe performance series inspired by the late Maestro Paul Freeman’s early concerts continues in collaboration with local cafes throughout Chicago; *CHI Projects* (Community Health Initiative Projects) allows Freeman Fellows to pursue musical activism based on how their personal interests align with our community needs through a combination of leadership and entrepreneurship training with CS Musicians and Freeman Fellows, allowing Fellows to develop a comprehensive skill set that rounds out their musical training.
FREEMAN FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM
The groundbreaking Freeman Fellowship program created by Sinfonietta’s late founder Paul Freeman to help eliminate institutional bias due to factors such as ethnicity, race, and socioeconomic status, today tackles all matters of diversity and inclusion. With four multifaceted, professional development fellowships to assist orchestral and ensemble musicians, conductors, arts administrators, and composers, Project Inclusion is helping to change the face of classical music in a positive, inclusive manner.

COLLABORATIONS
Promotion of Chicago Sinfonietta’s mission through various channels continues. Chicago Sinfonietta continues its partnerships with numerous organizations, including WFMT - it has been active in the 70th anniversary of the network and in its Bach to School program, as well as other initiatives with APM and others. The Sinfonietta has also partnered with Bard College, the Blair School of Music at Vanderbilt University, the South Dakota Symphony, and the University of Michigan School of Music for The Brevard Project: Reimagining the Future of Orchestral Programming, a six-day intensive seminar and think tank on orchestral programming intended for professionals and influencers in the orchestral field. The central goals of The Brevard Project are to re-evaluate the artistic mission of the American orchestra and to share the skills needed to curate a more comprehensive, more inclusive American orchestral repertoire.

Further underscoring Chicago Sinfonietta’s commitment to both its inner workings and to the City of Chicago and the surrounding area, President and CEO Johnson serves as co-chair of the city’s Cultural Advisory Council of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE), where he works with the Commissioner, the Mayor, and colleagues contribute to continued development of the rich cultural landscape of City of Chicago. Johnson also sits on the Steering Committee of Chicago Musical Pathways Initiative and is a member of the League of American Orchestras’ EDI Orchestra Management Committee.

ONLINE
The Sinfonietta also offers opportunities to explore and engage with classical music online through its expanded materials offering pre-concert commentary, artist interviews, the latest news, and much more. Visit the website for links to Sinfonietta’s various online outlets.

ABOUT CHICAGO SINFONIETTA
A tenured orchestra and acclaimed cultural leader that champions diversity, equity, and inclusion by creating community through curated symphonic experiences, Chicago Sinfonietta (CS) is a source of community through music, as well as ensuring and inspiring a continued investment in diversity and inclusivity in the genre of classical music to promote fairness and equity. Recognized as groundbreaking, dynamic and daring, with core values built around being culturally responsive and advocates of inclusivity in all aspects of the 35-year-old organization’s work, Chicago Sinfonietta’s unrelenting commitment to being at the forefront of innovation drives its high standard of symphonic experiences. CS takes pride in leading by example with immersive audience engagement activities,
impactful career development, education, and extensive community outreach programs. [www.chicagosinfonietta.org](http://www.chicagosinfonietta.org)

Photos and season logo available upon request. Email or call Laura Grant.

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