



chicagosinfonietta
MUSIC EXCELLENCE DIVERSITY

Saturday, September 24, 2011, 8:00 PM – Wentz Concert Hall
Monday, September 26, 2011, 7:30 PM – Symphony Center

As Fate Would Have It...

Chicago Sinfonietta

Mei-Ann Chen, Music Director and Conductor

Saibei Dance (from *Saibei Suite No. 2*) An-Lun Huang

Ennanga for Harp, Piano and String Orchestra William Grant Still

- I. Moderately fast
- II. Moderately slow
- III. Majestically

Ann Hobson Pilot, harp

On Willows and Birches, Concerto for Harp John Williams

- I. On Willows
- II. On Birches

Ann Hobson Pilot, harp

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 5 in C minor Ludwig van Beethoven

- I. Allegro con brio
- II. Andante con moto
- III. Allegro
- IV. Allegro

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PROGRAM NOTES


The Chicago Sinfonietta and Mei-Ann Chen met for the first time almost exactly two years ago, performing Huang's *Saibei Dance*. The connection from podium to player was electrifying and led to the seemingly inevitable events of this evening. Meeting again over the same piece, this is more than a case of history repeating. Featured in 2009 as a guest conductor, Maestro Chen has now taken the reins as Music Director and begins her first season with a program meditating, appropriately, on fate.

Both Mei-Ann and the orchestra share a passion for exploring music written by minorities and seek out masterpieces new and old unfairly overlooked by other orchestras. In his *Saibei Dance*, Chinese-Canadian composer An-Lun Huang fuses Chinese folk tunes and musical styles with the western orchestra to create a rousing work. Born in China to musical parents, Huang's undergraduate training in music was cut short by the arrival of the Cultural Revolution. Unwilling to give up his passion, he eventually found his way to the University of Toronto and his new-found home of Canada. Opening with strummed violins and a lively flute, *Saibei Dance*, is proof of Huang's ability to handle the orchestra and his knowledge and respect of her own musical heritage.

A composer whose works are no stranger to the Chicago Sinfonietta, William Grant Still broke numerous barriers for the African-American musicians who followed him. When he stepped onto the podium of the Los Angeles Philharmonic in 1939 he was the first African-American to conduct a major symphony orchestra, having already been the first to have a symphony performed by a major orchestra. From operas to popular music arrangements Still's talent was more than equal to his historic accomplishments. *Ennanga for Harp, Piano and String Orchestra* finds him, like Huang, connecting his musical heritage with the orchestra. Titled after the Ugandan harp of the same name, *Ennanga* cleverly evokes its namesake through an ensemble of only stringed instruments.


Interestingly, Still does not play the piano and harp against the strings in a traditional soloist-ensemble exchange. Rather all three play as equals in a constant back and forth to mimic the simultaneously lyrical and percussive sound of the *ennanga*. Written in 1956 for friend and virtuoso harpist Louis Adele Craft, the piece was premiered in Los Angeles shortly thereafter. Structured in a three movement fast-slow-fast model, the opening is filled with rhythmic tricks and turns, suggesting traditional Ugandan music. In the second movement, a beautiful song-like melody begins in the harp, slowly drifts to the strings, back to the harp, and finally fades off into the distance with a few hushed chords. After a brief call from the harp, the strings and piano launch into a rousing finale keeping everyone on their toes right to the end.

The harp provided the inspiration for John Williams's *On Willows and Birches* as well. Commissioned by the Boston Symphony in 2008 for their long-time principal harpist Ann Hobson Pilot, Williams was charged with writing a work for this beautiful but technically beguiling instrument. "James Levine, Music Director of the Boston Symphony, and Ann asked me if I would write a piece to celebrate her retirement. At first I thought: 'no.' Williams commented in an interview, "Harp is not easy to write for: all of the peddling and fingerings and so forth are very complicated. But then I thought about the privilege of being asked to write this for her." Fortunately for us, Ann won out in the end resulting in a two-movement concerto that highlights both her mastery of the instrument and the vast range of color and sound the harp can create.




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PROGRAM NOTES (CONT.)

The title is Williams' own combination of two separate texts which inspired the music. While composing the first movement Williams, "came upon a quote from the Biblical Psalm 137: 'We hanged our harps upon the willows....', which fascinated me. I had an image of harps hanging on the trees with the wind wafting through the strings creating this beautiful, delicate, and subtle sound." Williams, no stranger to crafting sound from images, skillfully evokes the text. As the harp shifts between defined melodies and atmospheric glissandos, the orchestra creates a sort of cloud of sound around her. The air clears briefly at the end for a short cadenza before leaping into the second movement.

Moving at a much quicker pace, but still finding its creative roots in the imagery of trees, the second movement is titled after Robert Frost's poem 'Birches.' I've always loved the Frost poem," Williams commented, "and the idea of, as I remember in my mind, the picture of a little boy swinging on the birch branches." Filled with rhythmic intricacies and brilliant orchestrations, the movement highlights Ann's virtuosity and joyful passion. Infectious in its playfulness, Williams certainly must have agreed with Frost that "One could do worse than be a swinger of birches."

It would be difficult to find someone unfamiliar with the fateful four-note gesture that opens Beethoven's **Fifth Symphony**. Heard in commercials, film, and even disco tunes, the Fifth is, as music critic Donald Tovey called it, "among the least misunderstood of musical classics." The famous tune was even used by the British in WWII to announce radio statements from the Prime Minister: the rhythm is the same as the morse code (short-short-short-long) of the letter 'V' for victory. While it remains up for debate whether or not Beethoven himself intended that the motive be "fate knocking at the door" the idea has become inseparable from the music and the events of his life surrounding its composition.

Having established notoriety as a composer and masterful improviser at the piano, it was in the fall of 1801 at the age of 30 that Beethoven began to come to terms with the reality of his hearing loss. In a letter to his confidant F.G. Wegeler discussing the terrifying inevitability, he declared that he would "seize Fate by the throat; it shall not bend or crush me completely." Beethoven made good on his promise, with the next 10 years being some of the most productive of his life. Written mostly between 1807-1808, the Fifth Symphony premiered at the historic marathon all-Beethoven concert, conducted by the composer himself, at Vienna's Theater an der Wien on December 22, 1808. In a program lasting more than four hours, he conducted not only the Fifth, but the Sixth Symphony, the Choral Fantasy, movements from his Mass, and performed piano improvisations. Largely ignored by critics, a performance of the Fifth was remounted a year later and the critic and writer ETA Hoffman took notice. He described the music in the most vivid of terms:

Radiant beams shoot through the deep night of this region, and we become aware of gigantic shadows which, rocking back and forth, close in on us and destroy all within us except the pain of endless longing—a longing in which every pleasure that rose up amid jubilant tones sinks and succumbs. Only through this pain, which, while consuming but not destroying love, hope, and joy, tries to burst our breasts with a full-voiced general cry from all the passions, do we live on and are captivated beholders of the spirits.

PROGRAM NOTES (CONT.)

Terrifying in its power, Beethoven's four-note 'fate' motive permeates the entire first movement with relentless ferocity. Heard as melody and accompaniment, either the tune or its insistent rhythm is found in nearly every measure. Beethoven allows a deceptive release from its over-bearing presence in the second movement with a lyrical, but still emotionally complex and troubled Adagio. Near the end of the third movement, just as the audience might think Beethoven is through with his 'fate' motive, it returns, threatening to overtake the orchestra again. Beethoven instead seizes these notes "by the throat" and resolutely shatters them with the "radiant beams" of a glorious C major in the fourth and final movement.

More than 200 years later, that musical moment still contains an indescribable mix of inevitability and surprise. One could describe the meeting of the Chicago Sinfonietta and Mei-Ann in similar terms, which has led to this evening, and surely many more, of great music making.

Composer and writer John Glover writes notes, articles, and online courses for organizations such as the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Glimmerglass Opera, the Chicago Sinfonietta, Carnegie Hall, and Opera America. Recent commissions come from Houston Grand Opera, the Five Boroughs Music Festival, and the American Conservatory Theater. He currently lives in New York City where he co-curates the series New YorksoundCircuit. For more information, please visit www.johnmakesnoise.com



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2011-2012 Season


**Mei-Ann Chen,
Music Director and
Conductor**

The first woman to win the Malko International Conductors Competition (2005),

Mei-Ann Chen is

considered one of America's most exciting and promising young conductors. Concluding a highly successful tenure as Assistant Conductor of the Baltimore Symphony last summer, she also accepted a three-year appointment as the Music Director of the Memphis Symphony Orchestra that began in the 2010-2011 season. Chen spent two years as the Assistant Conductor of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. Both her fellowships at the ASO and the BSO were sponsored by the League of American Orchestras. Chen's guest conducting appearances include all of the principal Danish orchestras, Norwegian Radio Orchestra, Taiwan National Symphony, Rochester Philharmonic, and the symphonies of Alabama, Atlanta, Bournemouth, Fort Worth, National, Oregon, Seattle, Toledo, Toronto, Trondheim, Grand Teton Music Festival, and Chautauqua Institution. Awarded the 2007 Taki Concordia Fellowship, she appeared jointly with Marin Alsop and Stefan Sandorling in highly acclaimed subscription concerts with the Baltimore Symphony, Colorado Symphony and Florida Orchestra. Maestro Chen has appeared twice with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra since January of 2010.

In June 2010, following a two year international search, Mei-Ann Chen was selected to succeed Chicago Sinfonietta Founder Paul Freeman as the first new Music Director in the twenty-four year history of the Orchestra. Sharing the podium with Founder and mentor Paul Freeman, in his emotional final performance in May 2011, Mei-Ann Chen kicked off the 2011-2012 Season with a thrilling performance in Millennium Park attended by over 7,000. The Sinfonietta is delighted to welcome Maestro Chen to our orchestral family.

A native of Taiwan, Chen has lived in the United States since 1989. She holds master's degrees in both conduct-

ing and violin from the New England Conservatory, and a D.M.A. in conducting from the University of Michigan, where she was a student of Kenneth Kiesler. Chen was a participant in the National Conducting Institute in Washington, D.C. and the American Academy of Conducting in Aspen. During her five-year tenure as Music Director of the Portland (OR) Youth Philharmonic, she led its sold-out debut in Carnegie Hall, received an ASCAP award for innovative programming, and was honored with a Sunburst Award from Young Audiences for her contribution to music education.


**Ann Hobson Pilot,
Harp**

After 40 years with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, legendary principal harpist, **Ann Hobson Pilot**, retired at the end of the Tanglewood 2009 season.

Ann Hobson Pilot is a graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music under Alice Chalifoux. She became principal harp of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1980, having joined the BSO in 1969 as assistant principal harp and principal with the Boston Pops. Before that she was substitute second harp with the Pittsburgh Symphony and principal harp of the Washington National Symphony.

Ms. Pilot has had an extensive solo career. She has performed with many American orchestras as a soloist, as well as with orchestras in Europe, Haiti, New Zealand, and South Africa. She has several CDs available on the Boston Records label, as well as on the Koch International and Denouement labels. In September 1999 she traveled to London to record, with the London Symphony Orchestra, the Harp Concerto by the young American composer Kevin Kaska, a work that she commissioned.

In May of 2010, Ms. Pilot was the recipient of an honorary Doctor of Music degree from Tufts University. She has received numerous awards including the Distinguished Alumni Award from the Cleveland Institute of Music in 1993 and

again in 2010 and the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Boston Musicians Association in 2010. She was awarded an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from Bridgewater State College in 1988.

In 1997 she traveled to South Africa to record a video documentary, "A Musical Journey," sponsored by the Museum of Afro-American History and WGBH. The film aired nationwide on PBS for three years. While there she performed with the National Symphony of Johannesburg and visited the San people of Namibia. The video is about the concert, her personal musical journey and tells the story of her African journey to find the roots of the harp.

Ms. Pilot is on the faculties of the New England Conservatory of Music, Boston University, Tanglewood Music Center, and the Boston University Tanglewood Institute. She has performed with the Boston Symphony Chamber Players, Marlboro Music Festival, Newport Music Festival, Sarasota Music Festival and the Ritz Chamber Players.

After the 2009 Tanglewood concerts and her official retirement, Pilot returned to the stage as soloist with the BSO opening the Boston Symphony season and the Carnegie Hall season with the premiere of a concerto written for her by John Williams, "On Willows and Birches" a concerto for harp and orchestra. Williams says "The exciting thing for me about writing concertos is that you are writing for a person—someone. Ann is more than a great harpist, she really is a great woman—it has to do with the inner ear or the inner soul, but she has it all." On October 3, the orchestra paid tribute to her dedicating the entire concert in her honor and featuring her in two other works for solo harp in addition to the Williams.

Pilot says she looks forward to lots of performances, master classes and recordings in the years ahead. She is currently working with producer Susan Dangel to create a new half-hour documentary that will tell the story of her life in music. She and her husband, Prentice Pilot, are currently residents of Osprey, Florida.



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20¹¹⁻¹² SEASON



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Under the night sky

Saturday, November 5, 2011, 8:00 PM | Wentz Concert Hall

Monday, November 7, 2011, 7:30 PM | Symphony Center

A 100th Anniversary performance of Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé* as only the Sinfonietta can do it: accompanied by a stunning video suite by artist / astronomer José Francisco Salgado.

The journey, the dream

Sunday, January 15, 2012, 3:00 PM | Wentz Concert Hall

Monday, January 16, 2012, 7:30 PM | Symphony Center

A grand tradition continues with our Annual Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., featuring a World Premiere by jazz flutist Nicole Mitchell and a mighty gospel choir.

Past tense, future tense

Thursday, April 19, 2012 | Symphony Center

As we prepare for our 25th Anniversary, guest conductor Harvey Felder looks back at some of the landmark pieces that shaped our destiny during our first year of performances.

Passion. Tragedy. Love.

Saturday, June 16, 2012, 8:00 PM | Wentz Concert Hall

Monday, June 18, 2012, 7:30 PM | Symphony Center

The dynamic young Harlem Quartet join us on a World Premiere arrangement of *West Side Story*, plus Mendelssohn's Shakespeare inspired *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: Día de los Muertos

Tuesday, November 1, 2011, 7:30 PM | Harris Theater

A stunning holiday celebration with guest conductor Hector Guzman, featuring the orchestral music of Mexico plus Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*.

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chicago sinfonietta

MEI-ANN CHEN, MUSIC DIRECTOR | PAUL FREEMAN, FOUNDER

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CHICAGO SINFONIETTA HISTORY

The Chicago Sinfonietta was founded by Maestro Paul Freeman in 1987 in response to the lack of opportunity for minority classical musicians, composers, and soloists. The orchestra remains a true trailblazer and a national model for classical music. Chicago Sinfonietta musicians truly represent the breadth of the city's multi-cultural landscape, welcoming audiences from all walks of life.

Under the guidance of Music Director Emeritus Paul Freeman and now Music Director Mei-Ann Chen, the orchestra performs at the highest artistic level and has achieved an outstanding reputation for its innovative programs. The Sinfonietta is dedicated to the authentic performance of Classical, Romantic and Contemporary repertoire and excels at presenting imaginative new works by composers and soloists of color.

The Chicago Sinfonietta has a proud history of having enriched the cultural, educational, and social quality of life in Chicago, while gaining significant recognition on the national and international stage. The orchestra prides itself on programming one-of-a-kind performances that stretch the boundaries of classical music presentations. It performs at Chicago's Symphony Center, Wentz Concert Hall at North Central College in Naperville, and the Harris Theater for Music and Dance at Millennium Park. The Chicago Sinfonietta is the official orchestra of the Joffrey Ballet.

During the first ten years of the Sinfonietta's history, the orchestra embarked on six international tours performing concerts in Germany, Austria, Italy, Switzerland and the Canary Islands. The Chicago Sinfonietta has produced fourteen compact discs, including the much heralded three-disc *African Heritage Symphonic Series* released on Cedille Records in 2002 and a live recording of the 2007 tribute concert to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The orchestra has performed twice at the John F. Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. In August of 2008, the Chicago Sinfonietta made its Pritzker Pavilion debut to over 11,000 people with a multimedia performance of Gustav Holst's *The Planets* accompanied by a video suite created by Adler Planetarium astronomer and artist José Francisco Salgado.

With the announcement of Paul Freeman's planned retirement in 2011, the organization conducted a two-year international search that resulted in the 2010 announcement of Mei-Ann Chen's appointment as Music Director. Maestro Freeman's final season culminated with a national broadcast of his final performance on WFMT 98.7 FM that also featured Maestro Chen as co-conductor for the evening. Maestro Chen's tenure as Music Director was formally introduced to the city on August 14, 2011 with "Hello Chicago!"; a spectacular concert in Millennium Park celebrating the diversity of Chicago's neighborhoods and people.

The 2011-2012 Season will be the first under that baton of Mei-Ann Chen.

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MISSION

The Mission of the Chicago Sinfonietta is to serve as a national model for inclusiveness and innovation in classical music through the presentation of the highest quality orchestral concerts and related programs. The Chicago Sinfonietta aspires to remove the barriers to participation in, and appreciation of classical music through its educational and outreach programs that expose children and their families to classical music, and by providing professional development opportunities for young musicians and composers of diverse backgrounds enabling new, important voices to be heard. This will help America become a true cultural democracy, in which everyone can share fully in its cultural resources and in which all can contribute to its cultural richness.

CHICAGO SINFONIETTA EDUCATIONAL AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Audience Matters is the Chicago Sinfonietta's core educational program. This program provides an immersive introduction to classical music for elementary school students in the Chicago Public School system. Through the program, students learn about the families of instruments in the orchestra from teaching artists – Sinfonietta musicians – who also relate composers, history, art, and architecture to the various periods of classical music. On multiple visits, musicians from different sections of the orchestra demonstrate their instruments through experiential tools, integrating visual, audio, and tactile elements to help the students learn. In addition, students and their families are invited to all Sinfonietta performances for the season. Over 1,000 students are participating in *Audience Matters* this year thanks to our generous donors.

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CHICAGO SINFONIETTA EDUCATIONAL AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

SEED (Student Ensembles with Excellence and Diversity) provides mentoring for young musicians. The SEED Program identifies talented high school musicians and offers them a series of workshops and master classes taught by Chicago Sinfonietta teacher-musicians in small ensemble settings. The program concludes with a concert performed by the ensembles. The goal of this program is to both inspire and mentor these young artists, and encourage their professional growth for the future.

Project Inclusion: Musicians of Color Fellowship Program

The Chicago Sinfonietta is delighted to welcome the 2011-2012 Fellows for *Project Inclusion*. This program, begun in 2007, provides professional development opportunities for talented minority musicians funded through the generous support of the Chicago Community Trust, the Joyce Foundation, and others. *Project Inclusion* addresses the Sinfonietta's long-term goal of increasing the number of minority musicians playing in orchestras across the U.S. by providing fellowships and ensemble experience for promising young musicians. Recent data shows that less than 3% of orchestral musicians performing with the top 1,000 orchestras are people of color.

Project Inclusion provides 2 year fellowships for young musicians of color that include rehearsing and performing with the orchestra, receiving one-on-one mentoring from senior members of the Sinfonietta, attending master classes and mock auditions, and assistance in job placement after completion of the program.

Name	Instrument
Elizabeth Diaz	Flute
Felix Petit	Violin
Renaudo Robinson	Violin
Victor Sotelo	Cello

We are also delighted welcome the 2011-2012 Project Inclusion Ensemble Fellows who will be performing in smaller ensembles at various community locations throughout the year. They are:

Name	Instrument
Jocelyn Butle	Cello
Brandon Patrick George	Flute
Kevin Lin	Viola
Shawnita Tyus	Violin
Dorthy White	Viola

Project Inclusion Orchestra and Ensemble Fellows Program is managed by Renée Baker. Our mentors include orchestra members Renée Baker, Principal Viola, John Fairfield, Principal French Horn, Janice McDonald, Principal Flute, and Karen Nelson, Principal Second Violin.

We also wish to acknowledge some very important partners whose assistance has been invaluable in developing and implementing *Project Inclusion*:

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The Chicago Sinfonietta is honored to welcome **Tara Dowd Gurber** as a Lifetime Trustee. Tara joined the Chicago Sinfonietta Board of Directors in 2005 and immediately began making an impact. Her advocacy and leadership created the ongoing partnership with Blue

Cross Blue Shield that has enabled the orchestra to present its concert and educational programs at the highest levels. Tara became the Chair of the Board of Directors in August of 2008 and served until the end of the 2009-2010 Season. During her tenure, Tara presided over the orchestra's search and selection of its new Music Director. In addition, she has served as co-chair of two Balls including the 20th Anniversary event.

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JUNE 2, 2012



CHICAGO SINFONIETTA PERSONNEL

Mei-Ann Chen, Music Director and Conductor

VIOLIN

Paul Zafer, concertmaster
Carol Lahti, asst concertmaster
Karen Nelson, principal second
David Belden, asst. principal
Lucinda Ali
Charles Bontrager
Elizabeth Brausa Brathwaite
Melanie Clevert-Sarapa
Terrance Gray
Carl Johnston
Carmen Kassinger
David Katz
Todd Matthews
James Sanders
Phyllis M. Sanders
Edith Yokley

VIOLA

Renée Baker, principal
Becky Coffman
Andrew Dowd III
Scott Dowd
Robert C. Fisher
Vannia Phillips

CELLO

Ann Griffin, principal
Donald Mead
Edward Moore
William Porter
Andrew Snow

BASS

John Floeter, principal
Brenda Donati
Alan Steiner

FLUTE

Janice MacDonald, principal
Claudia Cryer
Laura Hamm, Piccolo
Elizabeth Diaz*

OBOE

Ricardo Castaneda, principal
Amy Barwan
June Matayoshi, English Horn

CLARINET

Leslie Grimm, principal
Dileep Gangolli
Kathryne Pirtle, Bass Clarinet

BASSOON

Robert Barris, principal
Rachael Young
Steve Ingle, Contrabassoon

FRENCH HORN

John Fairfield, principal
Laura Fairfield
John Schreckengost
Elizabeth Mazur-Johnson

TRUMPET

Matt Lee, principal
Michael Brozick
Kevin Wood

TROMBONE

Katherine Stubbins, principal
Robert Hoffhines
Jemmie Robertson, Bass Trombone

TUBA

Charles Schuchat, principal

TIMPANI

Robert Everson, principal

PERCUSSION

Michael Folker, principal
Brandon Podjascek
Jon Johnson
Tina Laughlin

PIANO

Donald Mead

Names of string players are listed in alphabetical order, as the Chicago Sinfonietta uses seat rotation except for principals.

* Project Inclusion Fellow

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SEPTEMBER

Composers of the Month

Alexander Konstantinovich Glazunov (1865-1936)
and William Boyce (1711-1779)

Ensemble of the Month

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra

WFMT will play CSO recordings, past and present, throughout September to herald the new season. Of special note is the weekly Chicago Symphony Orchestra Radio Broadcast on **Sunday, September 25, at 1:00 p.m.**, a concert that featured the world premiere of *Danza Petrificada* by Bernard Rands and music by Cherubini, Strauss, Hindemith, and Prokofiev.

OCTOBER

Composer of the Month

Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

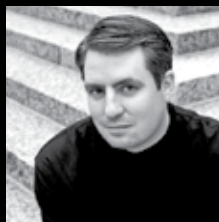
Lyric Opera of Chicago: Opening Night

George Preston and Roger Pines co-host the opening night broadcast of the Lyric Opera 2011-12 season, which features *The Tales of Hoffmann* by Offenbach, with Matthew Polenzani and James Morris. Tune in **Saturday, October 1, at 6:15 p.m.**

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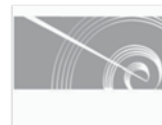
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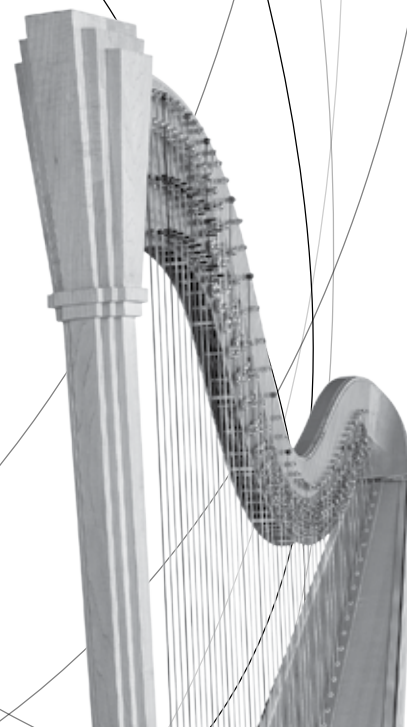
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