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Sarasota Concert Association presents

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

With Riccardo Muti, conductor

February 12, 7:30 p.m., at the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall

In a Great Performance Series Concert

Led by the preeminent conductor Riccardo Muti, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra has been recognized as “one the five top orchestras in the world” by Gramophone magazine.

"There are very good orchestras. There are excellent orchestras. There are great orchestras. And then there is the Chicago Symphony Orchestra."

(Wolfram Goertz)

(Sarasota, Florida) The Sarasota Concert Association is celebrating its 75th anniversary with a lineup of world-renowned classical artists and ensembles. Its 2020 Great Performers Series season continues Wednesday, February 12, 7:30 p.m., at the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall, with the acclaimed Chicago Symphony Orchestra led by Riccardo Muti. The program features Prokofiev's *Suite from Romeo and Juliet* and the Symphony No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 44. *Individual tickets are \$95-\$175. Tickets and information for the Great Performers Series are available by calling 941-225-6500 or online at www.scasarasota.org.*

“The Chicago Symphony Orchestra does not come our way every day,” says Joy McIntyre, SCA’s board president. “They last appeared in Sarasota 13 years ago. Now, under the direction of Riccardo Muti, Sarasota audiences will have the rare opportunity of experiencing a new, magnificent era of music-making by this extraordinary orchestra. And, to make it even more memorable, 2020 marks the 50th anniversary season of the conducting career of Riccardo Muti and the 75th anniversary of SCA.”

Now celebrating its 129th season, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) is consistently hailed as one of the world’s leading orchestras. In September 2010, renowned Italian conductor Riccardo Muti became its tenth music director. His vision for the Orchestra—to deepen its engagement with the Chicago community, to nurture its legacy while supporting a new generation of musicians, and to collaborate with visionary artists—signals a new era for the institution. The musicians of the CSO command a vast repertoire and annually perform more than 150 concerts, most at Symphony Center in Chicago, and, since 1936, at the Ravinia Festival in the summer. The CSO also tours nationally and internationally. Since its first tour to Canada in 1892, the Orchestra has performed in 29 countries on five continents in 62 international tours. Annually, the CSO engages more than 200,000 people of diverse ages, incomes, and backgrounds through the innovative programs of the Negaunee Music Institute at the CSO. The Institute also manages the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, the only pre-professional training ensemble of its kind affiliated with a major American orchestra.

Born in Naples, Italy, Riccardo Muti is one of the preeminent conductors of our day. In 2010, when he became the tenth music director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO), he had more than 40 years of experience at the helm of Maggio Musicale Fiorentino (1968–1980), the Philharmonia Orchestra (1973–1982), the Philadelphia Orchestra (1980–1992), and Teatro alla Scala (1986–2005). After he won the Guido Cantelli Conducting Competition in Milan in 1967, Muti's career developed quickly. Herbert von Karajan invited him to conduct at the Salzburg Festival in Austria in 1971, and Muti has maintained a close relationship with the summer festival and with its great orchestra, the Vienna Philharmonic, for more than 45 years. He has received the distinguished Golden Ring and the Otto Nicolai Gold Medal from the Philharmonic for his outstanding artistic contributions to the orchestra. He also is a recipient of a silver medal from the Salzburg Mozarteum and the Golden Johann Strauss Award by the Johann Strauss Society of Vienna. He is an honorary member of Vienna's Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, the Vienna Hofmusikkapelle, the Vienna Philharmonic, and the Vienna State Opera. Passionate about teaching young musicians, Muti founded the Luigi Cherubini Youth Orchestra in 2004 and the Riccardo Muti Italian Opera Academy in 2015. Through *Le vie dell'Amicizia* (The roads of friendship), a project of the Ravenna Festival in Italy, he has conducted in many of the world's most troubled areas in order to bring attention to civic and social issues

The 2020 Great Performers Series Season: Upcoming

February 25, 2020: The Knights and Gil Shaham, violin

Dedicated to transforming the orchestral experience and eliminating barriers between audiences and music, The Knights share the stage with one of the foremost violinists of our time, Gil Shaham. *(At Riverview Performing Arts Center)*

March 12, 7:30 p.m.: Pacifica Quartet and Orion Weiss, piano

Orion Weiss, acclaimed as “one of the most sought-after soloists of his generation,” joins forces with the Pacifica Quartet—an ensemble widely praised for its gripping interpretations of string quartet cycles. *(At Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall.)*

March 30, 7:30 p.m.: Musicians from Marlboro

An offshoot of the Marlboro Festival created by Rudolf Serkin, the Musicians from Marlboro are acclaimed both for their joyous, thoroughly prepared performances and for fostering artists at the beginning of their careers—including such luminaries as Yefin Bronfman, Richard Goode, and Richard Stoltzman. *(At Riverview Performing Arts Center)*

About the Sarasota Concert Association

The Sarasota Concert Association (SCA) is a nonprofit organization that fosters greater appreciation for world-class classical music by offering the community two engaging programs from December to April. The Great Performers Series, in its 75th season, brings world-renowned orchestras and chamber groups to the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall and the Riverview Performing Arts Center. The Music Matinee Series features outstanding regional artists in free community concerts at Beatrice Friedman Symphony Center and other venues. For more information about SCA, visit www.scasarasota.org.

Photos courtesy of the artist.