Chicago Philharmonic Proudly Celebrates Polish Classical Music with Ground-Breaking Five Day Festival

CHICAGO – (updated October 30 2018) As Chicago’s vibrant Polish community celebrates the 100 year anniversary of the regaining of Polish independence, Chicago Philharmonic honors the rich music traditions of Poland and the importance of the community in the cultural history of Chicago in Chicago Philharmonic Festival: Poland 2018, November 7-11. The ambitious festival will present world-class Polish musicians and soloists, Polish-Chicago music and arts organizations, music from Polish composers, the Chicago Philharmonic orchestra, and Artistic Director Scott Speck across five concerts presented in five days throughout the city of Chicago culminating in a free performance on November 11 – the day celebrating the 100th year of independence and Armistice Day. The festival comes following a tour of 10 Chi Phil musicians to Poland in April of this year and this is the first project of its kind from the organization, with plans to celebrate Chicago’s many diverse communities with similar festivals in the future.

The festival opens on November 7 with a guest performance from award-winning Polish string ensemble The Silesian Quartet performing at Fourth Presbyterian Church in downtown Chicago. The quartet is known for their skilled, enthusiastic interpretations of Polish repertoire both timeless and contemporary; “The highest level of performance. They play like devils.” (NRC Handelsblad) The ensemble will showcase their stunning textural range and artistry in masterful 20th century string quartets. Featured is trailblazing female composer Grażyna Bacewicz’s driving, expressive String Quartet No. 4, written in post-WWII Poland in 1951; String Quartet No. 2 by Karol Szymanowski, who took inspiration for the piece from the folk music of the Tatra Mountains in southern Poland; and String Quartet No. 1 by Henryk Górecki, which is centered around the 16th century Polish church song “Already it is Dusk”. Rounding out the program is String Quartet No. 3 (“Leaves of an Unwritten Diary”) by beloved Polish composer Krzysztof Penderecki. Introducing the concert and the festival is Chicago Philharmonic Executive Director Donna Milanovich, who traveled with Chicago Philharmonic musicians and Artistic Director Scott Speck to Poland in April 2018.

On November 8, the festival continues at the stunning St. John Cantius Church (named “The Most Beautiful Church in America” in 2016) with a solo performance from Kraków born and raised organ master Andrzej Białko. Recipient of the Polish Medal for Merit to Culture - Gloria Artis, Białko will perform organ music from Poland, Eastern Europe, and North America on the church’s historic 92-year old Casavant Frères pipe organ. The program will begin with Prelude and Fugue on B-A-C-H by Hungarian composer Franz Liszt as the composer explores the popular B-A-C-H motif in music. Also featured are pieces by Polish composers including church and organ composer Mieczysław Surżyński, living sacred choral music composer Paweł Łukaszewski, and
a Christmas Carol-inspired fantasy *Christmas Eve on Wawel Hill* by Feliks Nowowiejski. Also performed is an excerpt from prominent Czech composer Petr Eben’s “Job” for Organ cycle. In addition to these Eastern European composers, Białko completes the program with English-Canadian Healy Willan’s Five Preludes, influenced by the composer’s love of Gregorian chants. Speaking before the concert is Director of Liturgy and Music Chaplain of the Patrons of Sacred Music at St. John Cantius and enthusiastic supporter of the festival, Father Scott A. Haynes S.J.C.

In partnership with the **Polish Museum of America**, the Chicago Philharmonic will present jazz pianist Piotr Orzechowski on November 9 at the museum in an evening event with music, food, and drink. Orzechowski will bring his 24 Preludes and Improvisations, based on Johann Sebastian Bach’s pivotal 24 Preludes and Fugues. The first ever Pole to win the prestigious 1st Prize at Montreux Jazz Festival, Orzechowski’s 24 Preludes and Improvisations allow his extraordinary composition and improvisational talents to shine. Richard Owsiiany, President of the Polish Museum of America, will speak before the concert.

On Saturday, November 10, the festival’s first full orchestral concert, **Celebrate Polonia**, will take place at the Copernicus Center. Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Chicago Piotr Janicki will introduce this concert. Joined by young piano virtuoso Łukasz Krupiński, the Chicago Philharmonic and Principal Conductor Scott Speck will perform legendary Polish pianist, composer, and politician Ignacy Jan Paderewski’s Piano Concerto and Frédéric Chopin’s dazzling, technically demanding Andante spianato et grande polonaise brillante for solo piano and orchestra. Also featured is Karol Szymanowski’s Concert Overture, masterfully orchestrated in the style of the composer’s contemporary Richard Strauss. Finishing the program is the Tragic Overture by 20th century composer Sir Andrzej Panufnik, composed in secret during World War II and later reconstructed by the composer from memory after the score was lost in the devastating fires of the Warsaw Uprising. Pre-concert entertainment will be provided by the Lira Ensemble singers, Chicago’s premier Polish music ensemble.

November 11 2018 marks the 100th anniversary of the regaining of Polish Independence and Armistice Day. Chicago Philharmonic will join in the worldwide celebration with a free performance of Polish composer Wojciech Kilar’s Missa pro pace (Concert for Peace). Kilar has composed for symphony orchestra, chamber ensembles, and soloists, but is best known for his film score compositions including those for *The Pianist* and Francis Ford Coppola’s *Bram Stoker’s Dracula*. Kilar’s 2001 Mass, Missa pro pace, was composed for a full symphony orchestra, mixed choir, organ, and a quartet of vocal soloists. The piece is inspired by the composer's deeply spiritual background, and was performed in the presence of Pope John Paul II, the first Polish pope. The performance will be presented in a liturgical setting in Chicago’s stunning St. Hyacinth Basilica. Chicago Philharmonic will be joined by Kilar expert conductor Marek Moś and guest vocal soloists. Also included in the program is the world premiere of Fanfara by Krzysztof Penderecki, commissioned by PWM edition and being performed in 11 cities around the world all on November 11. Consul General
of the Republic of Poland in Chicago Piotr Janicki will speak before the concert on this historic day.

The Silesian Quartet
November 7, 7:30pm
Fourth Presbyterian Church
126 E Chestnut Street

Szymanowski String Quartet No. 2, Op. 56
Bacewicz String Quartet No. 4
Górecki String Quartet No. 1, Op. 62 (“Already it is dusk”)
Penderecki String Quartet No. 3 (“Leaves of an Unwritten Diary”)

Andrzej Białko, Organ
November 8, 7:30pm
St. John Cantius Church
825 N Carpenter Street

Liszt Prelude and Fugue on B-A-C-H
Anonymous from the Tablature of Jan of Lublin Salve Regina
Surzyński Elegy in F sharp Minor, Op. 30
Willan Five Preludes on Plainchant Melodies
Nowowiejski Polish Phantasy “Christmas Eve on Wawel Hill” Op. 9, No. 1
Łukaszewski Icon
Eben From “Job” for Organ, “God’s Reward”

Piotr Orzechowski, Jazz Piano
November 9, 8pm
Polish Museum of America
984 N Milwaukee Ave

Orzechowski 24 Preludes and Improvisations

Celebrate Polonia
November 10, 7:30pm
Copernicus Center
5216 W Lawrence Ave

Scott Speck conductor
Łukasz Krupiński piano

Paderewski Piano Concerto
Chopin Andante spianato et grande polonaise brillante
Szymanowski Concert Overture
Panufnik Tragic Overture

Concert for Peace
November 11, 1:30pm
St. Hyacinth Basilica
3636 W Wolfram Street

Chicago Philharmonic with members of Paderewski Symphony Chorus
Marek Moś conductor
Natalia Rubiś soprano
Katarzyna Sądej mezzo-soprano
Jesse Donner tenor
Kurt Link bass
Andrzej Białko organ

Kilar Missa pro pace (Mass for Peace)

Single tickets $25 - $75 | Students from $10
Festival package $89 - $116
chicagophilharmonic.org
(312) 957 0000

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The Chicago Philharmonic Festival: Poland 2018 is also supported by many partner organizations and individuals, including the Academy of Music in Kraków, The Krzysztof Penderecki European Centre for Music in Lusławice, Richard Guérin at RSG Music Inc. in New York, Ania Perzanowska, Dr. Karolina Jarosz at the Academy of Music in Kraków, and Joanna Dobecka-Lembert.

ABOUT THE CHICAGO PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY

The Chicago Philharmonic Society is a collaboration of over 200 of the highest-level classical musicians performing in the Chicago metropolitan area. Governed under a groundbreaking structure of musician leadership, the Society presents concerts at venues throughout the Chicago area that cover the full spectrum of classical music, from Bach to Bernstein and beyond. The Society’s orchestra, known simply as the
Chicago Philharmonic, has been called “one of the country’s finest symphonic orchestras” (*Chicago Tribune*), and its unique chamber music ensembles, which perform as the Chicago Philharmonic Chamber Players, draw from its vast pool of versatile musicians. The Society’s outreach programs connect Chicago-area youth to classical music and provide performance opportunities for members of the community. Founded nearly 30 years ago, the Chicago Philharmonic currently serves as the official orchestra of the Joffrey Ballet, continues its 25-year association with the Ravinia Festival, is a resident company of Harris Theater Chicago, and performs at Auditorium Theater, Symphony Center and all the great concert halls of the Chicago and North Shore area. In 2018, the Illinois Council of Orchestras awarded the Chicago Philharmonic "Orchestra of the Year".

**BIOGRAPHIES**

**Scott Speck, Artistic Director and Principal Conductor**, has inspired international acclaim as a conductor of passion, intelligence, and winning personality. Speck is the Artistic Director of the Chicago Philharmonic, and Music Director of the Joffrey Ballet, Mobile (AL) and West Michigan Symphony Orchestras. Speck led four performances for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 2014-15 and was immediately reengaged for four more concerts the following season. His concerts with the Moscow RTV Symphony Orchestra in Tchaikovsky Hall garnered unanimous praise. His gala performances with Yo-Yo Ma, Itzhak Perlman, Joshua Bell, Midori, Evelyn Glennie, and Olga Kern have highlighted his recent and current seasons as Music Director of the Mobile Symphony. He was invited to the White House as former Music Director of the Washington Ballet.

In past seasons Speck has conducted at London’s Royal Opera House at Covent Garden, the Paris Opera, Chicago's Symphony Center, Washington’s Kennedy Center, San Francisco’s War Memorial Opera House, and the Los Angeles Music Center. He has led numerous performances with the symphony orchestras of Chicago, Houston, Baltimore, Paris, Moscow, Shanghai, Beijing, Vancouver, Romania, Slovakia, Buffalo, Columbus (OH), Honolulu, Louisville, New Orleans, Oregon, Rochester, Florida, and Virginia, among many others.

Previously he held positions as Conductor of the San Francisco Ballet, Music Advisor and Conductor of the Honolulu Symphony, and Associate Conductor of the Los Angeles Opera. During a tour of Asia he was named Principal Guest Conductor of the China Film Philharmonic in Beijing.

In addition, Speck is the co-author of two of the world’s best-selling books on classical music for a popular audience, Classical Music for Dummies and Opera for Dummies. These books have received stellar reviews in both the national and international press and have garnered enthusiastic endorsements from major American orchestras. They have been translated into twenty languages and are available around the world. His third book in the series, Ballet for Dummies, was released to great acclaim as well.
The Silesian Quartet, winner of multiple awards and distinctions both in its native Poland and abroad, is one of the country’s leading chamber music ensembles. Its members – Szymon Krzeszowiec and Arkadiusz Kubica on violin, Łukasz Symnicki on viola, and Piotr Janosik on cello – spent the early years of their career developing their abilities under the supervision of musicians from such quartets as the LaSalle, Amadeus, Juilliard, Smetana, and Alban Berg string quartets. Today, the ensemble enjoys international renown, giving concerts throughout the world. It has performed in such famous venues as the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Wiener Konzerthaus, deSingel in Antwerp, Berliner Schauspielhaus, Tivoli in Copenhagen, Salle Pleyel in Paris, Carnegie Hall in New York, Jordan Hall in Boston, Hoam Art Hall in Seoul, and Sala de las Bellas Artes in Mexico City. The Quartet performs the canon of great chamber music masterpieces, but also devotes special attention to the music of our time. Its extensive discography includes recordings of music from many different eras, with particular emphasis on Polish music from the last three decades. Among its more than forty CDs, its set of Bacewicz’s complete string quartets on Chandos won the Gramophone Award in the chamber music category in 2017 and three have won the Fryderyk Award of the Polish Phonographic Academy for the Best Chamber Music Album. For twenty-five years, ‘The Silesian Quartet and Its Guests’ International Chamber Music Festival, organized annually by the Quartet, has attracted dozens of outstanding Polish and foreign artists.

Andrzej Białko, organ. Born in Kraków in 1959, Białko studied piano at the Musical Secondary School. In 1973, he began learning to play the organ, first privately and then at the Academy of Music in Kraków under the supervision of Professor Joachim Grubich. In 1981 he received the first prize in the International Organ Competition in Rome, Italy. In 1985, he was awarded first prize in the framework of the National Organ Competition in Bydgoszcz-Gdańsk. Białko has taken part in many Polish organ festivals and has also performed in Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, The Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Slovakia, Switzerland, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Lebanon and in both North and South America. He has been active as a teacher as the professor of the Organ Department at the Academy of Music in Kraków and the Władysław Żeleński State School of Music in Kraków. He collaborates with numerous music ensembles including Kraków Philharmonic and National Philharmonic in Warsaw. Kraków music lovers remember his unforgettable performances of complete organ works of Johann Sebastian Bach in the season 1990/91 and in the Jubilee Year 2000. He also presented an anthology of organ music from the 16th to the 20th centuries in a series of 20 concerts under the common title ‘Ars organi’ in the years 2001-2002. In 2006 he was awarded a silver medal "Gloria Artis" by the Polish Minister of Art and Culture.

In his diverse and ever-expanding repertoire, embracing all styles, Białko has also performed the complete organ works of Dietrich Buxtehude, Nicolaus Bruhns, Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, César Franck, Franz Liszt and Johannes Brahms. Several of his recordings became a precious contribution to the tape archives of the 2nd channel of the Polish Radio. He also recorded 20 CDs.
Piotr Orzechowski, jazz pianist. Born in 1990, pianist and composer Piotr Orzechowski is one of the most award-winning young jazz musicians. A graduate of Berklee College of Music, he has received many prizes, including 1st Prize at the Montreux Jazz Solo Piano Competition (2011), which he was the first Pole to win in the legendary Swiss festival’s history.

The artist is the leader of the High Definition Quartet, with which he has won several international competitions, and undertaken a collaboration with contemporary jazz trumpet giant Randy Brecker which resulted in two concert tours: in Poland (2012) and the Persian Gulf countries (2013). Piotr toured with such eminent jazz personalities as Victor Mendoza (Taiwan, 2014) and Perico Sambeat (Ecuador, 2015).

He has to his credit some albums as follows: a solo disc with arrangements and pieces inspired by the oeuvre of Krzysztof Penderecki – *Experiment: Penderecki* (Decca/Universal, 2012); a disc recorded with High Definition Quartet entitled *HOPASA*, containing his own compositions (EmArcy/Universal, 2013); and an album recorded in collaboration with Marcin Masecki accompanied by the Capella Cracoviensis, entitled *Bach Rewrite* (Decca/Universal, 2013). He released a piano solo album - *15 Studies for the Oberek* (Decca/Universal, 2014) and *Bukolics* (Bukoliki) that is his own arrangement of Witold Lutoslawski music (ForTune, 2015).

He has worked with such eminent personalities as, among others, Philip Glass, Steve Reich, Krzysztof Penderecki, Adrian Utley of Portishead, Avishai Cohen, Randy Brecker, Victor Mendoza, Carlos Zíngaro, Skalpel, Adam Baldych and Vladislav ‘Adzik’ Sendecki.

Łukasz Krupiński, piano, winner of the 7th International Piano Competition in San Marino, and the winner of all contest prizes: the Audience Award, the Music Critics Award, and the Orchestra Award (September 2016). Finalist of the International Competition of Ferruccio Busoni in Bolzano (2017) and the winner of International Piano Competitions in Aachen (2016) and Hanover (2015). In October 2015 Łukasz found himself in the prestigious group of the best 20 pianists of the 17th Frederic Chopin International Piano Competition.

His debut album *Espressione*, inspired by his musical travels to Italy with works of Haydn, Chopin and Scriabin, was released in January 2017 and received excellent reviews from Pizzicato Magazine, MDR Kultur, Radio Luxembourg, and Radio France. Łukasz Krupiński has given numerous concerts in Poland, Lithuania, Belarus, Belgium, France, Norway, Germany, Spain, Great Britain, Italy, Russia, China, South Korea, Australia and the USA. Two-time laureate of the "Pro Polonia" Foundation Award (2013, 2014), the Minister of Culture and National Heritage Prize for remarkable artistic accomplishments (2013, 2014), the Minister of Culture and National Heritage Scholarship (2015) and Krystian Zimerman Foundation Scholarship (2015). In 2016 he was honored with a Commemorative Medal of Frederic Chopin University of Music in recognition of artistic achievements.
Krupiński has won numerous prestigious prizes and awards at international piano competitions, including the Stanislaw Moniuszko International Competition of Slavic Music in Minsk, Belarus, 2011 (First Prize and Special Award), the 2nd Chopin Siberian International Piano Competition in Tomsk, 2013 (Grand Prix and two Special Awards), Yamaha Music Foundation of Europe Scholarship Competition 2014 (First Prize), the 46th Polish National F. Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw, 2015 (Second Prize), the 15th International Piano Competition 2015 of Chopin-Gesellschaft Hannover (First Prize), and the ClaviCologne International Piano Competition 2016 in Aachen (First Prize).

Krupiński is a graduate of the Frederick Chopin University of Music in Warsaw under the supervision of Professor Alicja Paleta-Bugaj and Dr. Konrad Skolarski. Currently he has been a student of Professor Arie Vardi at Hannover University of Music, Drama and Media.

The Lira Ensemble is the nation's only professional performing arts company specializing in Polish music, song and dance. Its mission is to bring the best of Polish culture into American life. Founded as the Lira Singers in 1965, the ensemble now makes about 50 appearances a year in the Chicago area, across the Midwest, occasionally around the nation, and has made six concert tours of Poland. Lira has produced nine major recordings that are sold nationwide.

Lira presents the full spectrum of Polish music and dance, both classical and folk, with informative and witty English language narrations that explain the traditions and history behind the works performed. Lira has long been trusted by Polish Americans as an expert culture bearer.

Lira is the arts outreach group of Chicagoland’s Polish-American community and often represents Polish Americans and Polish and Polish American culture at city, state and national events. Lira has won high praise, as well as awards, for its series of concerts performed jointly with Mexican Americans and African Americans and its outreach concerts for the American Jewish community, as well as outreach to other ethnic groups.

The company consists of a symphony orchestra, chamber ensembles, singers and dancers who perform serious, folk and popular Polish dance and music in the original language and in English translation. When appropriate, Lira artists perform in authentic folk garb of various regions of Poland as well as historically correct costumes from several periods of Polish history.

Lira is based in Chicago as artist-in-resident at Loyola University Chicago, which makes a significant, on-going contribution to the promotion of Polish culture in the United States by donating free office, rehearsal and storage space to the Lira company.
Lucyna Migala, co-founder of Lira, serves as artistic director/general manager and narrates Lira performances; Mina Zikri is conductor of the Lira Ensemble. Iwona Puc is choreographer and director of the Lira Dancers.

**Marek Moś, conductor**, is the founding Artistic Director of the AUKSO Chamber Orchestra and Artistic Director of the AUSKO Summer Philharmonic Festival in the Polish lake district. An outstanding Polish violinist and chamber musician, he studied in Bytom and Katowice under Kazimierz Dębicki and Andrzej Grabiec.

Moś is the founder and for many years primarius of the Silesian Quartet, which has become one of Europe’s finest ensembles. Together with this quartet Marek Moś has performed at important festivals and in prestigious venues in Europe and all over the world, such as the Konzerthaus in Vienna, Concertgebouw and Ijsbreker in Amsterdam, Vredenburg in Utrecht, Schauspielhaus in Berlin, Tivoli in Copenhagen, Tonhalle in Düsseldorf, De Singel in Antwerp, Merkin Hall in New York and Jordan Hall in Boston. It was also with the Silesian Quartet that Moś has made 30 world premiere performances of contemporary works – some of them dedicated to the ensemble.

Marek Moś has received numerous individual awards, including the Contemporary Music Competition in Cracow (1979), International UNESCO Tribune in Paris (1984, 1988) and from the Polish Composers Association (1994, 2005). He also received the silver "Gloria Artis" award from the Minister of Culture (2005) and the Silesian County Marshall Award (2005). Currently, in addition to very intensive concert activity, Marek Moś is also professor at the Karol Szymanowski Music Academy in Katowice.

**Natalia Rubiś, soprano**, praised by the German press for her clear and warm voice with luminous coloraturas, is currently studying under the tutelage of Doris Yarick-Cross at the internationally renowned Opera Program at Yale University. Miss Rubiś is a native of the small village Raba Wyżna, South of Poland. Since leaving her hometown she has had the opportunity to perform all across Europe. She made her professional operatic debut as Calisto in Händel's *Giove in Argo* at Händel Festspiele in Halle in June 2014. Fiordiligi in Mozart's *Cosi fan tutte* (Kraków), Donna Elvira in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (cover, Znojmo), Helena in Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (New Haven), Romilda in Händel's *Xerxes* (Dresden), and Sivene in Gluck's *Le Cinesi* (Bad Lauchstädt) are just a few of the roles she has performed.

Since October 2013 she has studied with Prof. Hendrikje Wangemann at the Hochschule für Musik in Dresden. In 2014 she completed her Masters Degree at the Music Academy in Wroclaw, Poland with the highest degree.

Rubiś has won several prizes including Special Prize at the Maria Malibran Vocal Competition in Milan and "Giovane Promessa" at the Musica Sacra International Competition in Rome. She was Laureate of the 2nd Prize at The International Competition "21st Century Art" in Kiev, Ukraine and at the 10th Vocal Competition in Wroclaw.
In October 2014 she took part in the Polish premiere of *Tempo e tempi* by Elliott Carter (for soprano and ensemble) during the Nostalgia Festival in Poznan, Poland. She has performed in many other festivals, such as Chopin and his Europe in Warsaw, Musikforum Viktring Klagenfurt, Music bridge Prague - Dresden, Theatrum Musicum in Krakow, Wratislavia Cantans in Wroclaw. She works with Fabio Bonizzoni, Václav Luks, Roman Válek, Rune Bergmann, Werner Ehrhardt, Jan Tomasz Adamus, Adam Banaszak, Jacek Rogala, Marek Czekala and others.

**Katarzyna Sądej, mezzo-soprano,** performs internationally in recital, concert, opera and oratorio. She has performed at Carnegie Hall, the Cartagena International Music Festival, the Zagreb Music Biennale, the Bard Summerscape Music Festival, the Nuits Blanches Festival of Toronto, the Ojai Music Festival, and Le Salon de Musiques in Los Angeles, among other prestigious venues.

Recent opera performances include her L.A. Opera debut as the Page of Herodias in Strauss’ *Salome*, her SOPAC Ottawa debut as Le Prince Charmant in Massenet’s *Cendrillon*, and an appearance in the title role of Bizet’s *Carmen* in the Palm Springs Opera Guild annual gala concert. She will make her Chinese debut at Opera Chengdu in 2019 as Giannetta in Donizetti’s *L’Elisir D’Amore*. Upcoming, she will be singing the mezzo-soprano solo in Durufle’s *Requiem* in Ottawa’s Concerts by the Canal series, and she will make her debut with the Chicago Philharmonic as the alto soloist in Wojciech Kilar’s *Missa Pro Pace*.

Other recent highlights include her San Diego Opera and Industry Opera debuts as well as the mezzo-soprano solos in J.S. Bach’s *Mass in B minor* at Festival Mozaic in San Luis Obispo. Her numerous recital performances have taken her around the world throughout North America, South America, Europe and Asia. Katarzyna is a graduate of Bard’s Vocal Arts Program and the University of Toronto’s Opera School. She is a featured soloist on the 2013 Metier Records’ CD *Rising at Dawn*. Her performance on the recording was described as “…nothing short of enthralling. Hers is a stunningly rich, beautiful voice, with a deep, perfectly centered vibrato and pitch allied to profound expressiveness.” (James Altena, Fanfare Magazine) Katarzyna has performed numerous world premieres, including a premiere of Pulitzer prize-winning composer John Harbison’s song cycle *A Right to Pleasure*.

**Jesse Donner, tenor,** is rapidly emerging on the operatic and concert stage with a voice that is “vibrant” (Chicago Classical Review) and “fresh and juicy” (Chicago Tribune). Donner holds a bachelor’s degrees from Iowa State University and a master’s degree from the University of Michigan, where he was seen in *Ariadne auf Naxos, Der Kaiser von Atlantis* and *L’incoronazione di Poppea*.

The Des Moines, Iowa native received the coveted 2015 Men’s Voice Fellowship from the Luminarts Cultural Foundation and the Bel Canto grand prize, received the 2014 George Shirley Award for Opera Performance, a Special Encouragement Award from the 2014 Metropolitan Opera National Council Regional Auditions, and First Place in the 2012 Michigan Friends of Opera Competition.
At Lyric Opera, Jesse Donner has appeared in *Capriccio* (Diener), *Tannhäuser* (Walther), *Nabucco* (Abdallo) and *Der Rosenkavalier* (Kellner). He also covered the lead tenor roles of General Alfredo in the world premiere of *Bel Canto*, Ismaele in *Nabucco*, and the Drum Major in *Wozzeck*. Other performing credits include his debut with Opera in the Ozarks as Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, as a tenor soloist in Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 with Adrian Symphony, and with the Civic Orchestra of Chicago in both Mozart’s Great Mass in C Minor and Poulenc’s *Les mamelles de Tiresias*. Other concert appearances include with the Grant Park Orchestra, the Toledo Symphony, and University of Michigan Symphony Orchestra.

**Kurt Link, bass,** has earned a reputation as one of America’s finest basses as a winner of the Metropolitan Opera, Liederkranz, Opera Index and Sullivan competitions. He has performed major bass roles with companies such as the Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, La Monnaie, Santa Fe Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Washington Opera, Dublin Grand Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Florida Grand Opera, Atlanta Opera, New Israeli Opera, the opera companies of Portland, Minnesota, Michigan, St. Louis, Utah, Edmonton and the opera festivals of Chautauqua, Wexford (Ireland), Hong Kong, Wolf Trap, Glimmerglass and Spoleto (USA and Italy).

Engagements from recent seasons include *Turandot* with Opera Birmingham, *Don Giovanni* with the Arizona Opera, *I Capuletti et I Montecchi* and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* with the Florentine Opera, *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Utah Symphony Orchestra & Opera, *Roméo et Juliette* with the Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center, *La Traviata* with El Paso Opera, and with the Metropolitan Opera for productions of *War and Peace*, *The Gambler* and *Macbeth*. In concert, recent engagements include Verdi’s *Requiem* with the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra and at the National Cathedral in Washington, Beethoven’s 9th Symphony with the Huntsville Symphony Orchestra, Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Kansas City Symphony and with the Japan Symphony, Mozart’s Mass in c minor with the Huntsville Symphony Orchestra, Mozart’s *Requiem* in Vienna, Munich, Budapest and Prague with the Dallas Symphony Chorus, and the bass soloist in Dvorak’s *Stabat Mater* with the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal.

Widely acclaimed in symphonic works, Mr. Link often performs *The Creation*, *St. Matthew Passion* (BWV 244), *Missa Solemnis*, the *Requiem* Masses of Verdi, Mozart and Gabriel Fauré, J.S. Bach’s Mass in B minor (BWV 232), Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 and many other works with Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, Montreal, Tokyo, Baltimore, Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Florida, Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Charleston, Phoenix, Jacksonville, Aspen, San Antonio, Milwaukee.

**Paderewski Symphony Chorus**
Founded in January of 2000, the Chorus of the Paderewski Symphony Orchestra is composed of the seasoned choral musicians and vocal music enthusiasts. It is an integral part of the PaSO Organization. Its members meet on weekly basis yearlong.
under the expert tutelage of Maestro Luciano Laurentiu. To date, the choir has performed more than 100 concerts with the orchestra as well as on its own. Covering a full range of music styles and forms from oratorio to opera and sacred music, the PaSO Chorus has performed in a multitude of Chicago area churches and concert halls, including the Orchestra Hall at Symphony Center, Rosemont Theatre, Harris Theatre, Millennium Park and the Copernicus Center. The highlights of past seasons include *Harnasie* by Karol Szymanowski, *Angelus* and *Exodus* by Wojciech Kilar, *Messiah* by Haendel, *Missa in F-major* by Michał Poniatowski, *Litania Ostrobramska* by Stanisław Moniuszko, Oratorio *The lord call on us* by Włodzimierz Korcz, oratorio *Tu es Petrus* by Piotr Rubik, and the *Haunted Manor* Opera by Stanisław Moniuszko, as well as a large selection of excerpts from opera, operetta, musicals and hundreds of popular and artistic songs.