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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Updated: NEA Announces Funding for Virtual Side by Side Concerts with the Chicago Philharmonic

Chicago, IL – (June 10 2020, updated 5:00pm) The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) has awarded Chicago Philharmonic $10,000 in support of the organization’s popular Side by Side with the Chicago Philharmonic community engagement program. The award was first approved in March 2020, followed by extensive revisions as Chicago Philharmonic adjusted the program to meet the new reality created by the pandemic. NEA staff enthusiastically worked with the revised concept of virtual Side by Side events.

“These awards demonstrate the continued creativity and excellence of arts projects across America and the nimbleness of our nation’s arts organizations in the face of a national crisis that shuttered their doors for months,” said Mary Anne Carter, chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. “By funding arts projects in every U.S. state, territory, and the District of Columbia, the National Endowment for the Arts again celebrates the opportunity to make the arts available to every corner of the country and to see how the arts can heal and unite us.”

Since the start of the shelter-in-place order in Illinois, Chicago Philharmonic has adapted its robust community engagement programming to fit the needs of students and community members around the city. Chi Phil AMP, an in-school mentorship program, continued with virtual offerings and served nearly 100 students at four under-resourced schools: Thomas Kelly High School, Victoria Soto High School, Crane Medical Prep High School, and Benito Juarez Community Academy. Additionally, Chicago Philharmonic launched the pilot program of PITCHing In 4 U in May 2020, providing over 100 community members from all backgrounds the opportunity with four one-on-one virtual lessons from professional Chicago Philharmonic musicians. Participants range in age from 10-83 years old, many of which are young students and beginning musicians taking advantage of this free community program.

Chicago Philharmonic proudly announces the sixth summer of its signature community engagement program, Side by Side with the Chicago Philharmonic, presented as part of the Chicago Park District and Mayor Lori Lightfoot’s Night Out in the Parks series. With respect for social distancing measures, the program will be adapted to bring virtual opportunities to students and community musicians across the city of Chicago, encouraging diverse musicians of all ages and backgrounds to work with Chicago Phil’s world-class musicians.

On June 21, Chicago Philharmonic will host a virtual event as an adaptation of the popular in-person Side by Side concerts. The event starts with a conductor-led rehearsal. Next, participants will be divided in breakout sessions for masterclasses with each instrument led by Chicago Philharmonic musicians. Culminating the experience is a final run through that will be recorded by each participant on their cell phone. After the event, Chicago Philharmonic staff will
create and share the composite performance video with the world for all to enjoy. The program for the concert will be as follows:

**Johann Strauss** *Perpetuum mobile*
**Georges Bizet** Pastorale from L'Arlésienne: Suite No.2
**John Philip Sousa** Stars and Stripes Forever

The event on Sunday, June 21 is presented in partnership with **Make Music Chicago**, connecting Chicago to 800 cities in 120 countries across the globe in celebration of the summer solstice.

Sunday, June 21
3:00-3:40pm rehearsal
3:45-4:10pm break out sessions
4:15-4:45pm recording “performance”

The second program in Summer 2020 will feature works by **Chevalier de Saint-Georges** (a beloved Classical era composer known as the African American “Mozart”), **Antonín Dvořák** (an iconic Czech composer with a deep love of America), **William Grant Still** (the 20th century neo-Romantic genius often referred to as the “Dean of Afro-American Composers”), and a selection from **Georges Bizet's** opera *Carmen*. Dates and more details will be announced soon.

Since the Chicago Philharmonic launched Side by Side in 2015, the program has been received enthusiastically by participants and audience members alike and has steadily expanded. Places for community musicians and student musicians as young as 8 are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Registration is required at [https://www.chicagophilharmonic.org/side-by-side-with-the-chicago-philharmonic/](https://www.chicagophilharmonic.org/side-by-side-with-the-chicago-philharmonic/).
ABOUT THE CHICAGO PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY

The Chicago Philharmonic Society is a collaboration of nearly 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 Chicago Philharmonic Chamber, draw from its vast pool of versatile musicians. The Society’s community engagement programs connect Chicago-area youth to classical music and provide performance opportunities for members of the community. Founded 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.” In 2019, the Illinois Council of Orchestras awarded the Chicago Philharmonic with “Programming of the Year” and “Community Relations of the Year.”

ABOUT NIGHT OUT IN THE PARKS

Side by Side with the Chicago Philharmonic is presented as part of the Chicago Park District’s Night Out in the Parks series, supported by Mayor Lori Lightfoot. Arts programming in neighborhoods across the city advances the goals of the Chicago Park District and the Chicago Cultural Plan. Now in its eight year, the 2020 Night Out in the Parks series hosts cultural events and programs at more than 250 neighborhood parks throughout the city, making community parks a safe haven and hubs of activity. Projects vary from traditional performances and concerts, to movies, peace rallies, community workshops, nature based programs, dance pieces, festivals, and more.

ABOUT MAKE MUSIC CHICAGO

The International Music Foundation is proud to present Make Music Chicago. Every June 21st, Make Music Chicago brings together Chicagoans to celebrate their ability to make music, regardless of age, ability or preferred musical style.

Unlike a typical music festival, Make Music Chicago is open to anyone who wants to take part. Every kind of musician—young and old, amateur and professional—takes to the streets, parks, plazas, and porches of Chicago to share music of all genres with friends, neighbors and strangers. All of it is free and open to the public.

Based on the French Fête de la Musique, Make Music Chicago was first presented in 2011. Chicago joins 800 cities in 120 countries across the globe, making the Fête de la Musique the world’s largest single day music festival. Make Music Chicago is also a member of the Make Music Alliance, connecting Chicago with over 60 other U.S. cities in celebrating this day of music.

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