FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Chicago Philharmonic Previews 2020-2021 Featured Artists and Programming Plans

Chicago, IL – (August 17 2020) Chicago Philharmonic shares initial plans for their 31st Season: Together, safely bringing beloved symphonic music to Chicagoans of all ages and backgrounds.

For the remainder of 2020, programming will be a mix of virtual and socially-distanced events. “Hear it Again” hosted by Artistic Director and Principal Conductor Scott Speck will consist of a listening experience and discussion of beloved performances each month. Special guest hosts will include famed American composer Augusta Read Thomas to revisit the World Premiere of Sonorous Earth and Visceral Dance Chicago’s Artistic Director and brilliant Choreographer Nick Pupillo returning for The Dream, and virtuoso violinist David Perry + Friends in a special Chicago Phil Chamber performance. These unique listening experiences will also include community engagement programs such as Spotlight and NEXT! to feature performances from young, talented musicians. Chicago Philharmonic plans to launch the first half of the 2020-2021 season in early Fall with a Fall 2020 Virtual Membership starting September 15. The membership includes entry to our “Hear it Together” virtual series plus membership-only perks.

Fall programming will also include several Chicago Phil favorites like Side by Side with the Chicago Philharmonic in December 2020. On Sunday September 13, Chicago Philharmonic returns to North Shore Center for the Performing Arts in Out Back Summer Sessions, a live, socially-distanced concert in their 31,000 square-foot parking lot. Tickets for Romantic Strings led by renowned violinist Robert Hanford are available at http://www.northshorecenter.org/.

In addition, PITCHing In POPups will take place throughout the month of August and September (weather permitting) in the front yards, porches, and local parks of Chicago Philharmonic musicians. These casual, socially-distanced open rehearsals will raise funds for
the Special Musician Assistance Fund (SMAF). Chicago Philharmonic musicians are volunteering their time and talents to produce these informal fundraisers to bolster the efforts of the PITCHing In social media campaign, which includes regular video content from our musicians and Scott Speck. As of August 13 2020, nearly $8,000.00 have been donated to SMAF and distributed to musician members in need.

In-person concerts are expected to begin in late Spring 2021, including rescheduled performances from our 2019-2020 season such as Aretha: A Tribute, featuring Broadway star Capathia Jenkins and three-time Grammy Award nominee Ryan Shaw. Spring will also introduce new concerts, including a free symphonic concert featuring Adrian Dunn, critically acclaimed multi-genre artist, composer, singer, songwriter, arranger, and producer, in Chicago’s Austin neighborhood in celebration of groundbreaking living African American composers.

Additional information, photos, or interviews with featured artists are available upon request.

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 symphonic music. 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 Phil Chamber, draw from its vast pool of versatile musicians. The Society’s community engagement programs connect Chicago-area youth to classical music by providing access to symphonic concerts, mentorship from Chicago Philharmonic musicians, and performance opportunities. Founded 30 years ago, the Chicago Philharmonic is known for providing symphonic support to international and national touring companies in all music genres and served as the official orchestra of the Joffrey Ballet for eight years. The Chicago Philharmonic also continues its 25-year association with Ravinia Festival, is a resident company of the Harris Theater for Music and Dance, and performs at all the great concert halls of the Chicago and North Shore area, including Auditorium Theatre and Symphony Center. The Illinois Council of Orchestras has awarded the Chicago Philharmonic “Orchestra of the Year” (2018), “Programming of the Year” (2019), “Community Relations of the Year” (2019), and “Executive Director of the Year” (2020).

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES, in order of appearance

SCOTT SPECK - Artistic Director and Principal Conductor
With recent performances in London, Paris, Moscow, Beijing, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Washington, Scott Speck has inspired international acclaim as a conductor of passion, intelligence, and winning personality.

Scott Speck was named Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of Chicago Philharmonic in June of 2013 and has been Music Director of the Joffrey Ballet since 2010. His concerts with the Moscow RTV Symphony Orchestra in Tchaikovsky Hall garnered unanimous praise. His gala performances with Yo-Yo Ma, Itzhak Perlman, Renée Fleming, Joshua Bell, Midori, Evelyn Glennie, and Olga Kern have highlighted his recent and current seasons as Music Director of the Mobile Symphony. This season he also collaborates intensively with Carnegie Hall for the
seventh time as Music Director of the West Michigan Symphony. He was invited to the White House as former Music Director of the Washington Ballet.

In past seasons Scott Speck has conducted at New York's Lincoln Center, 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, Scott Speck is the co-author of two of the world's bestselling 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.

Scott Speck has been a regular commentator on National Public Radio, the BBC, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, and Voice of Russia, broadcast throughout the world. He has been featured in TED talks and at the Aspen Ideas Festival. His writing has been featured in numerous magazines and journals.

Born in Boston, Scott Speck graduated summa cum laude from Yale University. There he founded and directed the Berkeley Chamber Orchestra, which continues to perform to this day. He was a Fulbright Scholar in Berlin, where he founded Concerto Grosso Berlin, an orchestra dedicated to the performances of Baroque and Classical music in a historically informed style.

He received his Master’s Degree with highest honors from the University of Southern California, served as a Conducting Fellow at the Aspen School of Music, and studied at the Tanglewood Music Center. He is fluent in English, German and French, has a diploma in Italian, speaks Spanish, and has a reading knowledge of Russian.

**AUGUSTA READ THOMAS - Composer**

The music of Augusta Read Thomas (b. 1964 in New York) is nuanced, majestic, elegant, capricious, lyrical, and colorful — "it is boldly considered music that celebrates the sound of the instruments and reaffirms the vitality of orchestral music" (Philadelphia Inquirer).

A composer featured on a Grammy-winning CD by Chanticleer and Pulitzer Prize finalist, Thomas’ impressive body of works “embodies unbridled passion and fierce poetry” (American Academy of Arts and Letters). The New Yorker magazine called her “a true virtuoso composer." Championed by such luminaries as Barenboim, Rostropovich, Boulez, Eschenbach, Salonen, Maazel, Ozawa, and Knussen, she rose early to the top of her profession. The American Academy of Arts and Letters described Thomas as “one of the most recognizable and widely loved figures in American Music."
She is a University Professor of Composition in Music and the College at The University of Chicago. Thomas was the longest-serving Mead Composer-in-Residence with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra for conductors Daniel Barenboim and Pierre Boulez (1997-2006). This residency culminated in the premiere of Astral Canticle, one of two finalists for the 2007 Pulitzer Prize in Music. During her residency, Thomas not only premiered nine commissioned orchestral works but was also central in establishing the thriving MusicNOW series, through which she commissioned and programmed the work of many living composers. For the 2017-2018 concert season, Thomas was the Composer-in-Residence with the Eugene Symphony Orchestra, while Francesco Lecce-Chong served as Music Director and Scott Freck as Executive Director. Thomas was MUSICALIVE Composer-in-Residence with the New Haven Symphony, a national residency program of The League of American Orchestras and Meet the Composer.

Thomas won the Ernst von Siemens Music Prize, among many other coveted awards. She is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Thomas was named the 2016 Chicagoan of the Year.

In 2016, Augusta Read Thomas founded the University of Chicago’s Center for Contemporary Composition, which is a dynamic, collaborative, and interdisciplinary environment for the creation, performance and study of new music and for the advancement of the careers of emerging and established composers, performers, and scholars. Distinguished by its formation within an uncompromising, relentlessly searching, and ceaselessly innovative scholarly environment, which celebrates excellence and presents new possibilities for intellectual dialogue, the Center comprises ten integrated entities: annual concert series featuring the Grossman Ensemble, CHIME, visiting ensembles, distinguished guest composers, performances, recordings, research, student-led projects, workshops and postdoctoral fellowships.

**NICK PUPILLO, Choreographer**

Nick Pupillo graduated from Indiana University with a Bachelor of Science in Ballet. In 2001, Pupillo joined the acclaimed Giordano Dance Chicago and toured with them for three years. Pupillo decided in 2006 to train and mentor young talent by developing Visceral Studio Company. In 2007, he founded Visceral Dance Center to provide the Chicago community with a new venue for artistic and technical growth. Pupillo also founded Visceral Dance Chicago in the fall of 2013. He created twelve signature works for the company: **Impetere, Senza di te, Sum Noir, My Realm, She Three, Vital, Atlas, Synapose, Soft Spoken, Take, Keep and Mad Skin**, as well as for collaborations with the Chicago Philharmonic: **La Revue De Cuisine, The Last Round, The Dream, and Trisagion**.

Pupillo has received various awards for his choreography, including “The Dance Chicago Outstanding Choreography Award” in 2005/ 2012 and “The Cliff Dwellers 2013 Choreographer of the Year.” His work has been described as “a stroke of choreographic genius...complex, tumbling changes...in this portrait of perpetual motion” (Chicago Tribune). Pupillo is frequently invited to conduct master classes in the U.S. and around the world; he received the 2018 Artistic Achievement Award from Chicago National Association of Dance Masters. Pupillo is currently an artist in residence at Culver Academies.

**VISCERAL DANCE CHICAGO**

Visceral Dance Chicago is a contemporary dance company dedicated to a bold and progressive
world of movement. Since its inception, the company has developed a diverse and respected repertoire. With works by distinguished choreographers Danielle Agami, Sidra Bell, Banning Bouldin, Mónica Cervantes, Marguerite Donlon, Brian Enos, Mark Godden, Robyn Mineko Williams, Harrison McEldowney, Fernando Melo, Ohad Naharin, Kevin O'Day, and Pupillo; Visceral Dance Chicago continues to challenge audiences' expectations. In January of 2015, Visceral Dance Chicago was named one of Dance Magazine’s “25 to Watch” recognizing the company’s accomplishments and potential in the national community. "Visceral Dance Chicago breathes life into the Chicago arts community with their ability to intertwine complex human emotions with the raw beauty of dance and physical movement" (Chicago Stage Standard).

DAVID PERRY - Violin

David Perry enjoys an international career as a chamber musician, soloist, and teacher. He has performed in Carnegie Hall and across the major cultural centers of North and South America, Europe, and the Far East. Mr. Perry joined the Pro Arte Quartet and the UW-Madison faculty in 1995, and was granted a Paul Collins Endowed Professorship in 2003. He has served as guest concertmaster with such groups as Chicago Philharmonic, China National Symphony Orchestra, Ravinia Festival Orchestra, American Sinfionette, and Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. Thanks to the Nathan McClure Opportunities Fund, Mr. Perry plays on a 1711 Franciscus Gobetti violin, arranged by Chancellor John Wiley and the UW Foundation.

ROBERT HANFORD - Violin

Robert Hanford is Concertmaster of the Lyric Opera of Chicago and frequently serves as Concertmaster of the Chicago Philharmonic. In the summers, he serves as a concertmaster at the Aspen Music Festival. Previously, Mr. Hanford was the Associate Principal Second Violinist of the Minnesota Orchestra, a member of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, and a member of Chicago’s Grant Park Symphony. He has appeared as a soloist on many occasions with the Chicago Philharmonic, Minnesota Orchestra, the Milwaukee Symphony, and other Midwestern orchestras. He has performed with numerous chamber ensembles, most recently as a member of the Rembrandt Chamber Players. Mr. Hanford attended Northwestern University and is currently on their faculty as a violin instructor. He graduated with first prize from the Orpheus Conservatory in Athens, Greece. For many summers, he was Concertmaster and violin instructor at the Birch Creek Music Festival in Wisconsin and performed and taught at the MidAmerica Chamber Music Festival, the Milwaukee Chamber Music Festival, and the Roycroft Chamber Music Festival.

CAPATHIA JENKINS - Vocalist

Capathia Jenkins made her Broadway debut in The Civil War, where she created the role of Harriet Jackson. She then starred in the Off-Broadway 2000 revival of Godspell, where she wowed audiences with her stirring rendition of ‘Turn Back, O Man’ which can still be heard on the original cast recording. She returned to Broadway in The Look of Love and was critically acclaimed for her performances of the Bacharach/David hits. Ms. Jenkins then created the roles of ‘The Washing Machine’ in Caroline, Or Change and ‘Frieda May’ in Martin Short-Fame becomes me where she sang ‘Stop the Show’ and brought the house down every night.

An active concert artist, Ms. Jenkins has appeared with orchestras around the world including the Cleveland Orchestra, Houston Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony (with Marvin Hamlisch), National Symphony, Atlanta Symphony, Seattle Symphony, Utah Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, San Antonio Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, Memphis Symphony, Nashville
Symphony, Toledo Symphony, Colorado Symphony, Toronto Symphony, Edmonton Symphony, Calgary Philharmonic, Kansas City Symphony, San Diego Symphony and the Hong Kong Philharmonic. She was a soloist with the Festival Cesky Krumlov in the Czech Republic. In 2011 Capathia had the great honor of performing in the ‘Broadway Ambassadors to Cuba’ concert as part of the Festival De Teatro De La Habana. Ms. Jenkins was a guest soloist with Peter Nero and the Philly Pops and with the Cincinnati Pops.

Her television credits include 30 Rock, the Practice, Law & Order SVU, the Sopranos, and Law & Order. She can be heard on the following film soundtracks: Nine, Chicago, and Legally Blonde 2.

RYAN SHAW - Vocalist
Ryan Shaw made his New York debut in Tyler Perry’s play I Know I’ve Been Changed. Mr. Shaw further made a name for himself doing Motown covers, joining the group Fabulous Soul Shakers. His first album, "This is Ryan Shaw," for Columbia, earned him a 2008 Grammy nomination for “I Am Your Man.” He opened for Van Halen’s 2007-2008 North American tour. In 2011, Mr. Shaw received another Grammy nomination for “In Between.” In 2014, he received his third for “Yesterday” on his new CD, "Real Love" on Dynotone Records. He has played Stevie Wonder on Broadway in Motown: The Musical; the cast album has also received a Grammy nomination.

ADRIAN DUNN - Composer, Singer, Producer
Adrian Dunn is an accomplished singer, songwriter, and producer. Mr. Dunn holds a Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degree in Voice from The Music Conservatory at Roosevelt University with additional musical studies in opera at The Sibelius Academy of Music in Finland.

Mr. Dunn has sung with the Chicago Symphony Chorus, Grant Park Symphony Chorus, Blossom Festival Chorus, and as a soloist with the North Shore Choral Society. He has sung in the CCM Spoleto Opera Festival in Spoleto, Italy, and is a frequent soloist in Handel’s Messiah. He sang the lead role in the 2017 Chicago premiere of the Paul Laurence Dunbar opera The Poet and in 2016 served as the opera chorus master for the midwest premiere of the opera Harriet Tubman – When I Crossed That Line to Freedom with the South Shore Opera Company of Chicago.

As an active professional singer, producer, and songwriter, Mr. Dunn has had the privilege of working with gospel greats such as Tremaine Hawkins, Myron Butler, Melonie Daniels, Troy Bright, Lamar Campbell, Damien Sneed, Walt Whitman and the Soul Children of Chicago, Smokie Norful, Jonathan Nelson, and many more. He was awarded Album Producer of the Year for AME Live featuring the AME International Mass Choir from the Rhythm of Gospel Awards. He has served on music staff for the AME General Conference in Philadelphia (2016) and in Nashville (2012). He opened the 2014 Thomas Dorsey National Convention of Choirs and Choruses for the AME Mass Choir. He is the album producer for the 2015 release AME 200: Celebrating 200 years of the AME church.

Mr. Dunn is a MacArthur grant recipient for his original work Hopera: A Hip Hop Opera. He was nominated for Best Music Director from the Black Theater Alliance Awards for his work Hopera: a Hip Hop Opera. He has opened for international Hip Hop Recording Artist The Roots at
Indiana University. He served as principal vocal coach for Kanye West’s artist development program Donda’s House. He was a featured artist and vocal coach for the live DVD recording of the Higher Ground Gospel Choir in Helsinki, Finland. He has toured throughout the US, South Africa, Italy, Germany, the UK, and Scandinavia.

Mr. Dunn has been a guest artist and presented lectures at The University of Wisconsin Madison, The School of the Art Institute, McCormick Theological Seminary, Clark Atlanta University, Illinois State University, Northern Illinois University, Columbia College Chicago, Bowling Green State University, University of California Irvine, California State University, West Virginia University, The University of Calgary, Governors State University and The University of Chicago. He is the former Artistic Director of the Legacy Black Music Project at Roosevelt University. He completed writing his first book in 2014 entitled *Your Voice Unleashed: A Singers Guide to Healthier, Smarter, Sustainable Singing*.

Currently, Mr. Dunn released his most recent album and second book entitled *Revelations: A collection of spirituals & gospel songs in seeking justice for Black lives*. He recently wrote the opening music for WWE’s Wrestle Mania 35 and completed a national album & book tour of the Revelations. He is a voice faculty member at The New Music School in downtown Chicago, IL. Mr. Dunn’s private voice students can be seen in Broadway National tours of LION KING, GHOST, KINKY BOOTS, RENT, BET’s show Sunday Best, Drury Lane Theater, The Paramount Theater, Black Ensemble Theater, and as background vocalists for major record label artists on tour throughout the US and abroad.

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