Chicago Philharmonic 2020-2021 “Hear it Together” Fall Programming starts this Sunday

Chicago, IL – (October 1 2020) Chicago Philharmonic’s 31st Season: Together premieres its virtual Fall “Hear it Together” series this Sunday.

The series begins on October 4th with Scott Speck accompanied by special guest composer Augusta Read Thomas, revisiting the world premiere of Sonorous Earth, performed by Chicago Philharmonic and Third Coast Percussion. Inspired by Thomas’ 2012 Resounding Earth for percussion ensemble alone, Sonorous Earth was commissioned by the Chicago Philharmonic or percussion quartet and orchestra. The concerto features over 300 bells and gongs sourced from a range of cultures and historical periods, Sean Connors from Third Coast Percussion will talk about what it was like performing this work. Prior to the main program, NEXT! returns with Shift Youth Orchestra, Ayriole Frost, Executive Director of Shift:Englewood, will introduce their original work and performance Sick Beats.

Fall programming support for “Hear it Together” encourages loyal patrons and donors to make a suggested donation of $15.00 for each program, for full access to the three-concert series individuals are suggested to give $45.00 and $70.00 for families. In honor of supporting donations to Fall "Hear it Together" programming,
donors will receive links to the program 48-hours before the event. Donations can be made by visiting
http://chicagophilharmonic.org/HearItTogether.

“HEAR IT TOGETHER” – SONOROUS EARTH
Sunday, October 4 2020
4PM, Virtual Event
Digital access to recording of the live event will be available for 24-hours.
https://www.chicagophilharmonic.org/hear-it-together-sonorous-earth/

“OUT BACK SUMMER SESSIONS” – CHICAGO PHIL BRASS
Sunday, October 11 2020
4PM, Live Event
Seating will be pre-assigned to maximize social distancing; patrons are expected to wear a face mask.
https://www.chicagophilharmonic.org/chicago-phil-chamber-brass-quintet/

“HEAR IT TOGETHER” – THE DREAM
Sunday, November 1 2020
4PM, Virtual Event
Digital access to recording of the live event will be available for 24-hours.
https://www.chicagophilharmonic.org/hear-it-together-the-dream/

“HEAR IT TOGETHER” – DAVID PERRY + FRIENDS
Sunday, December 6 2020
4PM, Virtual Event
Digital access to recording of the live event will be available for 24-hours.
https://www.chicagophilharmonic.org/hear-it-together-david-perry-friends/

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.

SEAN CONNORS

Sean Connors is an Ensemble Member and Technical Director of Third Coast Percussion. He has performed with Amphion Percussion, the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, eighth blackbird, the International Contemporary Ensemble, Signal, and Metropolis Ensemble, and he was the percussionist for 2 summers with the prestigious Aspen Music Festival Contemporary Ensemble.

As an educator, Sean served for 2 years as an assistant professor of percussion at the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point and taught elementary school and middle school music in the Chicago suburbs. Sean holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music, a Master of Music degree from Northwestern University and is currently pursuing a Doctor of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music.

THIRD COAST PERCUSSION

Founded in 2005, Third Coast Percussion is a Grammy Award-winning Chicago-based percussion quartet. For fifteen years, the ensemble has created exciting and unexpected performances that constantly redefine the classical music experience. The ensemble has been praised for “commandingly elegant” (New York Times) performances, the “rare power” (Washington Post) of their recordings, and “an inspirational sense of fun and curiosity” (Minnesota Star-Tribune). Third Coast Percussion maintains a busy tour schedule, with past performances in 35 of the 50 states and Washington, D.C., plus international tour dates in Canada, Colombia, Hong Kong, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Taiwan, and the United Kingdom.

AYRIOLE FROST

Ayriole Frost is an active composer, performer, and teacher. She co-founded and currently serves as the Executive Director of Shift:Englewood, a youth development program in Chicago. She is adjunct faculty at North Park University and a sought-after workshop leader for creative music projects around the country. Frost received her Bachelor of Music in Composition from Ball State University, where she studied composition, viola, and voice. She holds a Master of Music in Composition and teaching certification from Carnegie Mellon University. Frost completed the esteemed Sistema Fellows Program at New England Conservatory in 2014. She is a 3Arts Awardee and Rauschenberg Residency recipient.

SHIFT YOUTH ORCHESTRA

Shift:Englewood, founded in 2014, is a youth development organization in the Greater Englewood neighborhoods of Chicago whose mission is to promote social and personal growth through intensive music and leadership training. We work with young people ages 8-18 in schools in Greater Englewood, as well as provide college and young professional training to musicians interested in the intersection of music and social justice. Primarily an after school program, we have also begun filling a funding gap in Greater Englewood by providing quality music residencies during school. Our music programs are unique in that we focus on student voice, and foster creativity through both skills development and collective composition.