



**GRANT PARK
MUSIC FESTIVAL**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jill Hurwitz, 312.744.9179
jill.hurwitz@gpmf.org

**GRANT PARK MUSIC FESTIVAL EXPANDS ITS COMMITMENT TO
“FESTIVAL CONNECT” INCREASING MUSIC EDUCATION
AND ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR AUDIENCES OF ALL AGES**

Performances by the Grant Park Orchestra and Chorus, Apprentice Chorale and Project Inclusion Choral and String Quartets bring a renewed focus to Chicago’s neighborhoods

CHICAGO (June 2, 2017) — The Grant Park Music Festival expands its commitment to *Festival Connect*, its comprehensive initiative aimed to increase music education and engagement opportunities for audiences of all ages.

Working with the Chicago Park District and Mayor Emanuel’s *Night Out in the Parks* program, *Festival Connect* will continue to focus on the neighborhoods with performances by the Grant Park Orchestra, the Grant Park Chorus, *Project Inclusion Choral and String Fellows* and the *Festival’s Apprentice Chorale*.

In Millennium Park, the *Festival Connect* suite of programs includes *Classical Campers*, a half-day music immersion program for children, along with its *Young Artists Showcase* series, an opportunity for students from local music schools and summer music programs to perform in front of the Great Lawn at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion, prior to select Festival concerts. Additionally, patrons can learn more about the Festival’s performances and guest artists through pre-concert lectures and open lunchtime rehearsals.

A complete listing of *Festival Connect* programs is below. For more information about the Grant Park Music Festival and *Festival Connect*, visit gpmf.org or call **312.742.7647**. For additional information, visit the Grant Park Music Festival Facebook page or follow the Festival on Twitter @gpmf.

PROJECT INCLUSION

The Grant Park Music Festival expands its successful *Project Inclusion* professional development program, which guides young musicians from diverse backgrounds, traditionally underrepresented in the symphonic and choral field, towards careers in music. New this year, the Festival will launch the *Project Inclusion Choral Fellowship* program to compliment the *Project Inclusion String Fellowship* initiative.

A partnership with the Chicago Sinfonietta, the goal of *Project Inclusion* is to help establish a professional development pipeline aimed at building diversity in American orchestras.

After a rigorous audition process, four string musicians — Teddy Wiggins (violin), Robert Switala (violin), Danielle Taylor (viola) and Denielle Wilson (cello) — have been selected to spend their summer rehearsing and performing with Carlos Kalmar and the Grant Park Orchestra, and serving as teaching artists for the Festival’s *Classical Campers* program.

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The *Project Inclusion* String Fellows will also perform as a quartet at the following locations:

Thursday, June 15, 7 p.m., Harrison Park, 1824 S. Wood Street
Thursday, June 22, 7 p.m., Lincoln Park Cultural Center, 2045 N. Lincoln Park West
Thursday, June 29, 7 p.m., Indian Boundary Park, 2500 W. Lunt Avenue
Thursday, July 6, 7 p.m., Lake Shore Park, 808 N. Lake Shore Drive
Monday, July 10, 12:30 p.m., Hamilton Park, 513 W. 72nd Street
Monday, July 17, 12:30 p.m., Marquette Park, 6743 S. Kedzie Avenue
Thursday, July 20, 7 p.m., Mozart Park, 2036 N. Avers Avenue
Monday, July 24, 11 a.m., Maggie Daley Park, 337 E. Randolph Street
Thursday, July 27, 7 p.m., Eckhart Park, 1330 W. Chicago Avenue

The *Project Inclusion* Choral Fellows — Tiana Sorenson (soprano), Elena Snow (alto), Jared Esguerra (tenor) and Dorian McCall (bass) — will spend the month of June rehearsing with Chorus Director Christopher Bell, Principal Conductor Carlos Kalmar, and members of the Grant Park Chorus. They will also perform with the *Project Inclusion String Quartet*, *Festival Apprentice Chorale* and the Grant Park Orchestra and Chorus.

APPRENTICE CHORALE

The Festival's *Apprentice Chorale*, founded and led by Grant Park Music Festival Chorus Director Christopher Bell, provides advanced training and performance opportunities for pre-professional vocal students, offering students the opportunity to perform alongside the Grant Park Orchestra and Chorus at the Pritzker Pavilion. They will also perform with the *Project Inclusion* ensemble at the Chicago Cultural Center as part of the Dame Myra Hess Memorial concerts on June 21 and Lincoln Park Cultural Center on June 22. The *Apprentice Chorale* is a collaboration with DePaul University and University of Illinois at Chicago.

The *Apprentice Chorale* includes sopranos Margaret Schlofner, Laura Smalley and Mary Gale Tan; alto Megan Magsarili; tenors Sebastian Armendariz and Daniel Beatty; and basses Ian Hosack and Alexander Krueger.

GRANT PARK ORCHESTRA AT THE SOUTH SHORE CULTURAL CENTER

Christopher Bell will lead the Grant Park Orchestra in the Festival's annual *Independence Day Salute* on Wednesday, July 5 at 6:30 p.m. at the South Shore Cultural Center, 7059 S. South Shore Drive. The evening will feature rousing marches and patriotic anthems, including favorites like Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture*, Sousa's *Stars and Stripes Forever* and the *Armed Forces Salute*.

GRANT PARK CHORUS

Christopher Bell and the Grant Park Chorus return to two of the city's cultural hubs — the South Shore Cultural Center, 7059 S. South Shore Drive, on Thursday, July 13 at 7 p.m. and the Columbus Park Refectory, 5701 W. Jackson Boulevard on Tuesday, July 18 at 7 p.m. — with Rachmaninov's *Vespers*.

CLASSICAL CAMPERS

The Festival hosts *Classical Campers*, its wildly popular half-day music immersion program for children ages 6-12, in collaboration with the Chicago Park District. Throughout the season, over 1,500 students from more than 30 different Chicago neighborhoods will learn about the instruments and sections of the orchestra with Festival educators and *Project Inclusion* fellows, take part in hands-on musical activities, and conclude their day with a visit to a Festival rehearsal and talk-back with Grant Park Orchestra members. *Classical Campers* often provides children with their first exposure to a live classical music performance.

YOUNG ARTISTS SHOWCASE

On Fridays at 5:30 p.m. before the Grant Park Orchestra takes the stage, audiences are treated to concerts by students from local music schools and summer music programs at the front of the Great Lawn at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion. Student groups include Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras, Merit School of Music, New Music School, Chicago Metamorphosis Orchestra Project and Chicago Mariachi Project, among other organizations.

PRE-CONCERT LECTURES

The Festival continues to provide educational experiences for people of all ages that encourage the audience to learn more about the music. Its free popular *Pre-Concert Lecture* series returns with exclusive conversations between guest artists and expert music commentators including WFMT's *Relevant Tones* host **Seth Boustead**, CSO's *Sounds and Stories* contributor **Laura Sauer** and WFMT host **Dennis Moore**. June special guests include violinist **Vadim Gluzman** (June 14); pianist **Conrad Tao** (June 23) and conductor **Miguel Harth-Bedoya** and baritone **Takaoki Onishi** (June 28 and 30). Lectures take place in Millennium Park's Family Fun Tent, on the walkway to the west of the Pavilion, one hour before each concert.

OPEN LUNCHTIME REHEARSALS

Orchestra and chorus rehearsals take place June 13—August 18, Tuesdays through Fridays typically between 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Audiences are welcome to sit in the Pavilion Seating Bowl during rehearsals and Festival docents will talk about the week's concerts during rehearsal breaks. A special Brown Bag Lunch talk-back with Chorus Director Christopher Bell will take place on Wednesday, June 28 at approximately 12 Noon.

For more than 80 years, the Grant Park Music Festival has been Chicago's summer musical sensation, demonstrating that classical music, performed by a world-class orchestra and chorus can have a transformative impact on the city. Showcased in the city's most spectacular setting, the Festival continues to be the summer gathering place for all of Chicago. The Jay Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park is the official home of the Grant Park Music Festival, with free seats available for every concert.

The Festival is led by Artistic Director and Principal Conductor Carlos Kalmar, along with Grant Park Chorus Director Christopher Bell, Grant Park Orchestral Association President and CEO Paul Winberg, and Board Chair Stephen Smith.

The Grant Park Music Festival gratefully acknowledges the generous support from its 2017 sponsors: BMO Harris Bank, Season Sponsor; AbelsonTaylor, Presenting Sponsor of "American Accents;" Fairmont Chicago Millennium Park, Official Hotel; Macy's, Official Picnic Sponsor; and ComEd, Concert Sponsor; with additional support from the Paul M. Angell Family Foundation, Walter E. Heller Foundation and Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation.

Festival Connect is supported by ComEd, Robert and Isabelle Bass Foundation, Inc. and Colleen and Lloyd Fry and the Lloyd A. Fry Foundation.

The Grant Park Music Festival is a key partner in Mayor Rahm Emanuel's *Night out in the Parks* program. *Night Out in the Parks* is an initiative featuring more than 2,000 cultural activities annually in Chicago Park District locations citywide in support of the City of Chicago's Cultural Plan.

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