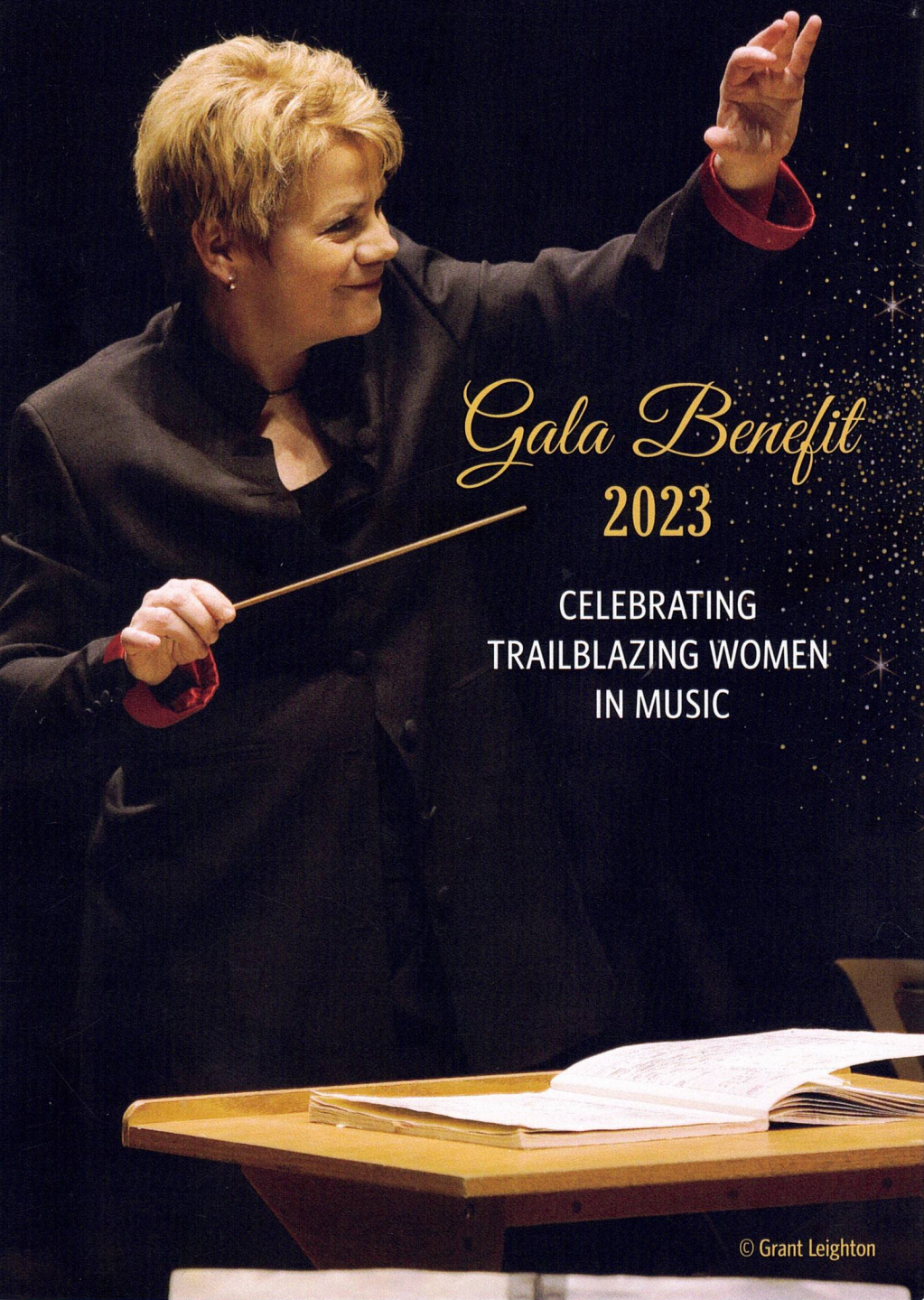


Music Institute of Chicago



Gala Benefit
2023

CELEBRATING
TRAILBLAZING WOMEN
IN MUSIC

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ACADEMY CELLO ENSEMBLE

The seven cellists in the MIC Academy, joined by MIC faculty member Bianca d'Avila do Prado, are pleased to play Heitor Villa-Lobos' famous work for soprano and cello ensemble, *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5*. MIC faculty soprano Angela De Venuto will sing the haunting melody of this work that, when it was first recorded in 1939, instantly made Villa-Lobos famous.

SERGE KALINOVSKY, 16, an Academy Merit Scholarship Fellow, is a student of Susan Moses in Bloomington, Indiana. He has been the First Prize winner of the 2020 Indianapolis Symphony Maurer Young Musicians Contest, the 2021 Philadelphia International Music Festival Competition, the 2023 DePaul Concerto Competition, the 2023 Orchestra Indiana Young Artist Competition, and a runner-up at the 2023 International Young Artist Concerto Competition in Chicago. He has participated in the IU Summer String Academy, Pinchas Zukerman's Young Artists Program, and the Heifetz International Music Institute in Virginia. This summer, he will attend Chamber Music Northwest and Music@Menlo Young Artists Programs.

MA'AYAN KERTCHER, 17, an Academy Merit Scholarship Fellow, currently studies with Academy faculty member Dr. Tanya Carey. Ma'ayan has been featured on WFMT's *Introductions* program several times and has played for esteemed artists including Yo-Yo Ma, Richard Aaron, and Natasha Brofsky. She has also received honors in the Rembrandt Chamber Music Competition and Society of American Musicians Competition.



Photo: top row (l to r) Simon Updegraff, Xavier Miyazaki, Lucy Wu.

Bottom row: Serge Kalinovsky, Jan Vargas Nedvetsky, Amelia Zitoun, and Ma'ayan Kertcher.

XAVIER MIYAZAKI, 16, an Academy Merit Scholarship Fellow, has studied at the Meadowmount School of Music during the summers of 2021 and 2022, performed for the Emperor of Japan, and played in masterclasses with David Requiro and Lluís Claret. A passionate advocate for social justice, Xavier frequently performs for older adults in isolation through MIC's Musical Pen Pals program and participates in Kids' Guernica, a global art-based youth diplomacy and peace program. Xavier studies with Hans Jensen and plays a German cello, c. 1890, generously loaned to him by the Carlsen Cello Foundation.

JAN VARGAS NEDVETSKY, 16, an Academy Merit Scholarship Fellow, studies with Hans Jensen and Oleksa Mycyk. As a solo and chamber performer, Jan has won numerous awards in competitions and soloed with orchestras in the United States and Europe. Most recently Jan was a First Alternate winner of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Young Artist Competition, a Semi-Finalist in the 2023 and 2022 Sphinx Competitions, and a First Prize winner in the 2022 Society of the American Musicians Competition. He participated in the 2016-2021 Musica Mundi International Chamber Music Festivals in Waterloo, Belgium; 2019-2021 Moulin D'Ande Masterclasses in Ande, France; and 2022 Meadowmount School of Music in Westport, New York.

SIMON UPDEGRAFF, 16, began studying cello at age four and studies with faculty member Avi Friedlander. He is a Scholarship Fellow at the Music Institute of Chicago's Academy and a Merit Scholarship winner at the Music Institute of Chicago. He received an honorable mention in the 2022 Walgreens National Concerto Competition and was selected for the 2022 Illinois Music Education Association all-state honors orchestra. Simon has won First Place in the Primary, Junior, and Intermediate cello division competitions of the Society of American Musicians.

LUCY WU, 14, an Academy Merit Scholarship Fellow, began cello studies at age seven and currently studies with Dr. Stefan Kartman. She won the 2019 and 2020 MYSO Concerto Competition and made her solo orchestral debut with MYSO. In 2023, Lucy was a finalist in the Bolz Young Artist Competition, performing the Elgar Concerto with the Madison Symphony Orchestra. She was also a finalist and recipient of the Anne French Burnham Scholarship award at the 2023 Schubert Club Competition.

AMELIA ZITOUN, 17, an Academy Merit Scholarship Fellow, currently studies with Hans Jensen. Amelia has won first place in many competitions, including the Bolz Young Artist Competition, the Milwaukee Symphony's Stars of Tomorrow Competition, the Civic Music Association of Milwaukee High School Competition, the DePaul Concerto Competition, and the Schubert Club Competition (junior and senior divisions). She will compete as a semi-finalist in the Stulberg International String Competition later this month. This summer she will attend the Perlman Music Program.