

March 16, 2021

## RAVINIA FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES PLANS TO PRESENT LIVE MUSIC THIS SUMMER

### 2021 SEASON MARKS REOPENING OF THE OLDEST OUTDOOR MUSIC FESTIVAL IN THE COUNTRY

**Health of Ravinia's audiences, artists, community, and staff  
is top priority**

**HIGHLAND PARK, IL**—The Ravinia Festival announced today that it plans to reopen in July for the 2021 summer season, presenting its signature mix of classical, popular, and chamber music programming. The health of audiences, artists, community, and staff has been prioritized in accordance with guidance from state and local health officials and consultation with Northwestern Medicine.

All concerts at Ravinia this summer will take place outside in the open-air Pavilion, have a reduced audience capacity, and be offered with reserved-in-advance, distanced seating in the Pavilion, Lawn, and dining facilities. The number of artists on stage will also be reduced, in order to allow for proper distancing between performers.

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra will return to Ravinia in July for its six-week summer residency. Conductor **Marin Alsop** will lead seven concerts with the orchestra in her first season as Ravinia's Chief Conductor and Curator.

Ravinia President and CEO **Jeff Haydon**, who is presiding over his first season at the festival, said, "Ravinia believes that music and the arts are an essential part of the personal, artistic, and economic recovery from this past year. Our 36 acres of outdoor space provide the perfect setting for a healthy and inspiring experience for all of our guests. The

experience will be a little different than in the past, but our science-based approach to carefully reopening the park puts safeguards in place so that audiences can again enjoy live performances.”

He continued, “We are grateful to all of our partners, neighbors, donors, and advisors who have helped us find the path to presenting live music that will inspire our community, audiences, students, and artists. I extend our deepest thanks to Dean Harrison, Dr. Gary A. Noskin, and the rest of the team at Northwestern Medicine for their expert guidance in our planning.”

“After such a challenging year for performing artists worldwide, I am truly excited to work once again with the marvelous Chicago Symphony Orchestra in their beautiful summer home at Ravinia,” said Marin Alsop. “It will be extremely moving to perform once again for live audiences in my debut season as Chief Conductor and Curator.”

“The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association is proud of the long-standing partnership that has made the Ravinia Festival the summer home of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra since 1936,” said CSOA President **Jeff Alexander**. “We are so pleased to be working closely with our colleagues at the festival to bring the sounds of the orchestra back to Ravinia this summer, and are looking forward to concerts taking place once again in this beautiful setting.”

“The musicians of the orchestra appreciate Ravinia’s commitment to the great tradition of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s summer residency,” said CSO Members’ Committee Chair **James Smelser**. “We look forward to performing live concerts at our beautiful summer home.”

The full lineup of 2021 concerts will be announced in late April along with the protocols for attendance. The Ravinia [website](#) will feature the latest information.

The Ravinia Steans Music Institute (RSMI) will also return to the festival grounds this summer, with its fellows from 2020 participating in person this year in its programs for jazz, chamber music, and voice. RSMI has made appropriate modifications to accommodate a collaborative and healthy environment for its young professional musicians. RSMI concerts will, as always, be livestreamed on YouTube, but this year will also be broadcast to the Lawn, as there will not be public audiences inside Bennett Gordon Hall.

During the past year, Ravinia’s flagship education programs for students—Reach Teach Play—continued with a hybrid mix of virtual and in-person instruction, reaching 20,000 students and families and providing a necessary element of stability in a year full of change.

**Christine Taylor Conda**, Director of Ravinia’s Reach Teach Play programs, said, “We are so proud that our Reach Teach Play staff and team leaders were able to find successful ways of engaging with students despite the pandemic’s challenges. Ravinia’s board was so supportive, and allowed our mission to press on to find new meaning.” She also commented on the moments that motivate her team: “When we get to see a child receive their instrument or achieve something musically for the first time, it is magic. At that moment, that child becomes a member of the Ravinia Family forever.”

Haydon added, “I am so very proud of the Ravinia staff for finding safe ways to continue reaching Chicagoland students through Reach Teach Play school programs and to continue to provide training for our talented Ravinia Steans Music Institute fellows throughout the world during the past year. These programs were important lifelines of inspiration for everyone involved! We look forward to welcoming both programs back in person this summer.”

[Ravinia](#), the oldest outdoor music festival in the country, was forced to cancel its 2020 season due to the worldwide pandemic and close the park for the first time since the Great Depression. In lieu of a live season in 2020, Ravinia produced RaviniaTV, a weekly variety show webcast on its YouTube channel, featuring interviews, musicians at home, community features, and performances from the storied venue, and From the Vault, a series of streamed archival performances by RSMI fellows in previous seasons.

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