

—MARIA MANETTI SHREM GREAT ARTIST PERFORMANCE—

Saturday, January 17, 2026, 8pm  
Zellerbach Hall

## Chicago Symphony Orchestra Riccardo Muti, *conductor*

### PROGRAM

Johannes BRAHMS (1833–1897)    Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98  
(1884–85)  
Allegro non troppo  
Andante moderato  
Allegro giocoso  
Allegro energico e passionato

### INTERMISSION

Igor STRAVINSKY (1882–1971)    Divertimento, Suite from *The Fairy's Kiss*  
(1928)  
Sinfonia  
Danses suisses  
Scherzo  
Pas de deux

Maurice RAVEL (1875–1937)    *Boléro* (1928)

*This performance by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra  
is a Maria Manetti Shrem Great Artist Performance.*

*Leadership support for this performance is provided  
by Jerome and Thao Dodson and by The Dr. M. Lee Pearce Foundation, Inc.*

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## JOHANNES BRAHMS

## Symphony No. 4 in E Minor, Op. 98

Brahms' Fourth Symphony is his final statement in a form he had completely mastered, although for a very long time he was paralyzed by the nine examples by Beethoven. It's difficult to imagine what Beethoven or Brahms might have done next, since their last symphonies seem to sum up all either knew of orchestral writing. The difference is that Beethoven's choral symphony opened up a vast new world for the rest of the 19th century to explore, while Brahms reached something of a dead end. But what a glorious ending it is. Brahms was never one to forge new paths—like Bach and Handel, he added little to the historical development of music—and yet he always seemed to prove that there was more to be said in the language at hand.

Brahms' Fourth Symphony begins almost in mid-thought, with urgent, sighing violins coming out of nowhere; it often disorients first-time listeners. (Brahms meant it to: he originally wrote two preparatory bars of wind chords and later crossed them out, letting the theme catch us by surprise.) The violins skip across the scale by thirds—falling thirds and their mirror image, rising sixths—a short-hand way of telling us that the interval of a third pervades the harmonic language of the entire symphony. (It also determines key relationships: the third movement, for example, is in C major, a third below the symphony's E minor key.)

Brahms has a wonderful time playing with the conventions of sonata form in the first movement. He seems to make the classical repeat of the exposition, but, only eight measures in, alters one chord and immediately plunges into the new harmonic fields of the development section. Listen for the great point of recognition—at *ppp*, the quietest moment in the symphony—with which Brahms marks the recapitulation. For 12 measures, the music falters like an awkward conversation, the winds suggesting the first theme, the violins not seeming to under-

stand. Suddenly they catch on and, picking up the theme where the winds left off, sweep into a full recapitulation capped by a powerful coda.

In the *Andante moderato*, Brahms takes the little horn call of the first measure and tosses it throughout the orchestra, subtly altering its color, rhythm, and character as he proceeds. A forceful fanfare in the winds introduces a juicy new cello theme. (It turns out to be nothing more than the fanfare played slowly.) Near the end, shadows cross the music. The horns boldly play their theme again, but the accompaniment suggests that darkness has descended for good.

The lightning flash of the *Allegro giocoso* proves otherwise. This is music of enormous energy, lightened by an unabashed comic streak—unexpected from Brahms, normally the most sober of composers. Here he indulges in the repeated tinklings of the triangle, and he later boasted that “three kettledrums, triangle, and piccolo will, of course, make something of a show.” Midway through, when the first theme's thundering left foot is answered by the puny voice of the high winds, the effect is as funny as anything in Haydn.

Throughout his life, Brahms collected old scores and manuscripts to study their pages to see what history might teach him. More than once, he spoke of wanting to write a set of variations on a theme he remembered from a cantata by Bach. But no one before Brahms had seriously thought of writing a strict *passacaglia*—a continuous set of variations over a repeated bass line—to wrap up a symphony.

The finale to Brahms' Fourth Symphony isn't a musty, academic exercise, but a brilliant summation of all Brahms knew about symphonic writing set over 32 repetitions of the same eight notes. Trombones make their entrance in the symphony to announce the theme, loosely borrowed from Bach's Cantata No. 150, *Nach dir, Herr, verlangt mich* (I Long for You, O Lord) [the cantata is no longer thought to be by Bach]. To bring the

ancient passacaglia form into the 19th century, Brahms superimposes over his variations the general outline of sonata form, with an unmistakable moment of recapitulation midway through.

A look at the finale in its entirety reveals the sturdy four-movement structure of the classical symphony: Brahms begins with eight bold and forceful variations, followed by four slow variations of yearning and quiet eloquence, an increasingly hectic dancelike sequence, and an urgent and dramatic final group that provides a triumphant conclusion.

One can follow Brahms' eight-note theme from the shining summit of the flute line, where it first appears over rich trombone harmonies, to the depths of the double bass, where it descends as early as the fourth variation, supporting a luscious new violin melody. Even in the twelfth variation, where the theme steps aside so the focus is on the poignant, solemn song of the flute, the spirit of those eight notes is still with us. And as Arnold Schoenberg loved to point out, the skeleton of the main theme from the first movement also appears in the penultimate variation, like the ghostly statue in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. The finale is as magnificent and as satisfying as any movement in symphonic music; it's easy to assume that, having written this, Brahms had nothing left to say. We'll never know whether that was so, or if, in the end, he simply ran out of time.

## IGOR STRAVINSKY

### *Divertimento, Suite from The Fairy's Kiss*

Igor Stravinsky had known and loved Tchaikovsky's music from childhood—certainly ever since he was taken to *The Sleeping Beauty* for the first time at the age of seven or eight. Some 30 years later, acting on a suggestion from Diaghilev, Stravinsky even orchestrated two passages from *The Sleeping Beauty* that Tchaikovsky had cut before the first performance. Stravinsky's next work, the opera *Mavra*, was dedicated to "the memory of Tchaikovsky, Glinka, and Push-

kin," and prompted by Diaghilev's *Sleeping Beauty* revival. And so, in 1928, when Stravinsky was asked to compose a ballet inspired by Tchaikovsky's music for Ida Rubinstein's new company, Stravinsky jumped at the challenge. The ballet was to be produced in November 1928, on the thirty-fifth anniversary of Tchaikovsky's death.

For his subject, Stravinsky turned to Hans Christian Andersen, whose powerful and fantastic tales had been part of Stravinsky's childhood, along with Tchaikovsky's music. He picked Andersen's "The Ice Maiden," apparently finding in Tchaikovsky's creative life (branded by the Muse's kiss) a parallel with the tale of a boy who is doomed by the kiss of the Ice Maiden. The ballet was described as an allegory.

Having already breathed new life into music by Pergolesi in *Pulcinella*, here Stravinsky decided to use music by Tchaikovsky, limiting himself only to works not written for orchestra. But where *Pulcinella* fashioned something purely Stravinskian out of old music he held in no particular regard, *The Fairy's Kiss* is a loving homage to his favorite Russian composer. Later, Stravinsky claimed he could no longer remember "which music is Tchaikovsky's and which mine," but at various times he identified (not always accurately) a number of Tchaikovsky's songs and piano pieces that he had borrowed. (Lawrence Morton eventually narrowed the debt list to some 14 works.)

Stravinsky set to work with untiring enthusiasm. He rented a room in a mason's cottage where he could work undisturbed. The music was barely completed in time for the premiere, which the composer conducted, on November 27, 1928; Stravinsky wasn't entirely pleased with Bronislava Nijinska's choreography (the public evidently shared his view), but he had been too busy finishing the music to check out the dancing.

The music is prime Stravinsky, largely based on lesser Tchaikovsky. Only two Tchaikovsky works are used complete; the



rest are excerpts. Most are taken from little-known songs and piano miniatures. Stravinsky's handling of borrowed material runs the gamut: he merely assigns instruments to the notes of Tchaikovsky's popular humoresque for piano, but much of the original music is so totally transformed that it's easy to understand Stravinsky's not remembering which music was whose.

As early as 1931, Stravinsky approved playing excerpts from the 45-minute ballet score as a concert-hall suite. In 1945, he finally settled on his own suite, which he called the *Divertimento*, cutting out nearly half of the music but including substantial chunks from the first three of the ballet's four scenes.

In 1962, Stravinsky returned to Russia after nearly 50 years. The Stravinskys, along with Robert Craft, arrived in Moscow on September 21. On October 4, they flew to Leningrad, where Stravinsky was met by Vladimir Rimsky-Korsakov (the youngest son of the composer), who was then living in the apartment where Stravinsky had written *The Firebird* more than half a century before. On October 8, Stravinsky conducted a concert of his own music. Before the performance, Stravinsky addressed the crowd, saying that he had attended his first concert in this hall: "Sixty-nine years ago, I sat with my mother in that corner," he said, pointing, "at a concert conducted by Nápravnik to mourn the death of Tchaikovsky." He then conducted music from *The Fairy's Kiss*.

## MAURICE RAVEL

### *Boléro*

One of the most famous pieces ever written, *Boléro* began as an experiment in orchestration, dynamics, and pacing. Ravel was quick to tire of his exercise—he once said that, although people thought it his only masterpiece, "Alas, it contains no music." But he didn't object to being famous. Late in 1927, Ravel accepted a commission from Ida Rubinstein and her ballet company to orchestrate six piano pieces from Albéniz's *Ibéria*

as a sequel to his brilliant scoring of Musorgsky's *Pictures from an Exhibition*. But when Ravel returned from his whirlwind concert tour of America and encountered problems with the exclusive rights to *Ibéria*, he dropped the project and instead chanced upon a tune with "a certain insistent quality" that became *Boléro*. "I'm going to try and repeat it a number of times without any development, gradually increasing the orchestra as best I can," he remarked at the time, and that's precisely what he did.

*Boléro* was an immediate success as a ballet, but its real hey-day started after Rubinstein's exclusive rights ran out, and the first concert performances began. Ravel was embarrassed by its popularity:

I am particularly anxious that there should be no misunderstanding as to my *Boléro*. It is an experiment in a very special and limited direction, and it should not be suspected of aiming at achieving anything different from, or anything more than, it actually does achieve. Before the first performance, I issued a warning to the effect that what I had written was a piece lasting 17 minutes and consisting wholly of orchestral texture without music—of one long, very gradual crescendo. There are no contrasts, and there is practically no invention except in the plan and the manner of the execution.

One can imagine Ravel's dismay when he realized that this was the music that would carry his name around the world. But, while *Boléro* is by no means his most accomplished or sophisticated work, it is, like every single piece in the Ravel canon, impeccably detailed and polished music. (In 40 years, Ravel only wrote about 60 works, nearly all of which belong in the standard repertoire—an almost unparalleled achievement.) The first tune, stated by the flute, is as familiar as any melody in music, yet how many of us could accurately sing it from memory, precisely following its unpredictable, sinuous curves and recalling the ever-fresh sequence of long and short notes. Certainly the second



tune, a free and supple melody introduced by the high bassoon, has an elusive, almost improvisatory quality.

Ravel proceeds with his exercise, stating the first tune twice, then the second one twice, and so on back and forth, each time adding new instruments not just to effect a gradual crescendo, but to create an astonishing range of orchestral colors. Just before the

end, Ravel's patience suddenly wears out, and he makes a sudden swerve from a steady diet of C major into E major, upsetting the entire structure and toppling his cards with the sweep of a hand.

—Phillip Huscher

*Phillip Huscher is the program annotator for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.*

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

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Born in Naples, Italy, **Riccardo Muti** is one of the preeminent conductors of our day. The Chicago Symphony Orchestra's distinguished tenth music director from 2010 until 2023, Muti became the Music Director Emeritus for Life beginning with the 2023–24 Season.

His leadership has been distinguished by the strength of his artistic partnership with the orchestra; his dedication to performing great works of the past and present, including 17 world premieres to date; the enthusiastic reception he and the CSO have received on national and international tours; and 12 recordings on the CSO Resound label, with four Grammy awards among them.

Before becoming the CSO's music director, Muti had more than 40 years of experience at the helm of Maggio Musicale Fiorentino (1968–1980), the Philharmonia Orchestra (1972–1982), the Philadelphia Orchestra (1980–1992), and Teatro alla Scala (1986–2005).

Herbert von Karajan invited him to conduct at the Salzburg Festival in Austria in 1971. Muti has maintained a close relationship with the summer festival and its great orchestra, the Vienna Philharmonic, for more than 50 years. He has received the distinguished Golden Ring and the Otto Nicolai Gold Medal from the Philharmonic for his outstanding artistic contributions to the orchestra. He has also received a silver medal from the Salzburg Mozarteum and the Golden Johann Strauss Award from the Johann Strauss Society of Vienna. He is an

honorary member of Vienna's Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, the Vienna Hofmusik-kapelle, the Vienna Philharmonic, and the Vienna State Opera. In 2021, he received the highest civilian honor from the Austrian government, the Great Golden Decoration of Honor.

Muti has received innumerable international honors. He is a Cavaliere di Gran Croce of the Italian Republic, Knight Commander of the British Empire, Commander of the French Legion of Honor, Knight of the Grand Cross First Class of the Order of Saint Gregory the Great, and a recipient of the German Verdienstkreuz. Muti has also received Israel's Wolf Prize for the Arts, Sweden's Birgit Nilsson Prize, Spain's Prince of Asturias Award, Ukraine's State Award, Japan's Praemium Imperiale and Order of the Rising Sun Gold and Silver Star, as well as the gold medal from Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the "Presidente della Repubblica" award from the Italian government. Last month, during a special concert at the Vatican, Pope Leo XIV presented Muti with the Prize of the Ratzinger Foundation for his immense artistic contributions.

Riccardo Muti's vast catalog of recordings, numbering in the hundreds, ranges from the traditional symphonic and operatic repertoires to contemporary works. Passionate about teaching young musicians, he founded the Luigi Cherubini Youth Orchestra in 2004 and the Riccardo Muti Italian Opera Academy in 2015. Through *Le vie dell'Ami-*

*cizia* (The roads of friendship), a project of the Ravenna Festival in Italy, he has conducted in many of the world's most troubled areas in order to bring attention to civic and social issues.

The label RMMUSIC is responsible for Riccardo Muti's recordings.

[riccardomuti.com](http://riccardomuti.com)

[riccardomutioperacademy.com](http://riccardomutioperacademy.com)

[riccardomutimusic.com](http://riccardomutimusic.com)

Founded by Theodore Thomas in 1891, the **Chicago Symphony Orchestra** is consistently hailed as one of the world's great orchestras. Riccardo Muti, the orchestra's distinguished tenth music director from 2010 until 2023, became Music Director Emeritus for Life at the beginning of the 2023–24 Season.

The history of the ensemble began in 1889, when Theodore Thomas, the leading conductor in America and a recognized music pioneer, was invited by Chicago businessman Charles Norman Fay to establish a symphony orchestra. Thomas' aim to build a permanent orchestra of the highest quality was realized at the first concerts in October 1891 in the Auditorium Theatre. Thomas served as music director until his death in January 1905, just three weeks after the dedication of Orchestra Hall, the orchestra's permanent home designed by Daniel Burnham.

The CSO's other distinguished music directors include Frederick Stock, Désiré Defauw, Artur Rodzinski, Rafael Kubelík, Fritz Reiner, Jean Martinon, Sir Georg Solti, Daniel Barenboim, and Riccardo Muti. In April 2024, Klaus Mäkelä was named the orchestra's eleventh music director, and he will begin an initial five-year tenure as Zell Music Director with the 2027–28 Season. Mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato is the CSO Artist-in-Residence for the 2025–26 Season.

The musicians of the CSO command a vast repertoire and annually perform more

than 150 concerts, most at Symphony Center in Chicago, and, since 1936, at the Ravinia Festival in the summer. The CSO also tours nationally and internationally. Since its first tour to Canada in 1892, the orchestra has performed in 30 countries on five continents in 65 international tours.

Patrons around the globe enjoy weekly radio broadcasts of CSO concerts and recordings via the WFMT Radio Network and online at [cso.org/radio](http://cso.org/radio). Launched in 2007, CSO Resound is the ensemble's Grammy Award-winning independent record label, featuring live performances with world-class conductors and guest artists. Since 1916, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus have amassed an extensive discography that has earned 65 Grammy awards from the Recording Academy.

The CSO is part of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association, which includes the following entities. The Chicago Symphony Chorus, founded in 1957, is the country's largest professional chorus. Founded during the 1919–20 season, the Civic Orchestra of Chicago is a training ensemble for emerging professionals with Ken-David Masur serving as its principal conductor. Symphony Center Presents features guest artists and ensembles across an expansive array of genres, including classical, jazz, world, and contemporary. The Negaunee Music Institute offers community and educational programs that annually engage more than 200,000 people of diverse ages and backgrounds throughout the Chicago-land area.

Thousands of patrons, volunteers, and donors—corporations, foundations, government agencies, and individuals—support the CSOA each year. The CSO's music director position is endowed in perpetuity by a generous gift from Zell Family Foundation. The Negaunee Foundation provides generous support in perpetuity for the work of the Negaunee Music Institute.



**VIOLINS**

Robert Chen  
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 Associate Concertmaster  
*The Cathy and Bill Osborn Chair*  
 David Taylor\*  
 Assistant Concertmaster  
*The Ling Z. and Michael C. Markovitz  
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 Yuan-Qing Yu\*  
 Assistant Concertmaster  
 So Young Bae  
 Cornelius Chiu  
 Gina DiBello<sup>‡</sup>  
 Kozue Funakoshi  
 Russell Hershow  
 Qing Hou  
 Gabriela Lara  
 Matous Michal  
 Simon Michal  
 Sando Shia  
 Susan Synnstedt  
 Rong-Yan Tang

Baird Dodge  
 Principal  
 Danny Yehun Jin  
 Assistant Principal  
 Lei Hou  
 Ni Mei  
 Hermine Gagné  
 Rachel Goldstein  
 Mihaela Ionescu  
 Melanie Kupchynsky<sup>‡</sup>  
 Wendy Koons Meir  
 Ronald Satkiewicz<sup>‡</sup>  
 Florence Schwartz

**VIOLAS**

Teng Li  
 Principal  
*The Paul Hindemith Principal  
 Viola Chair*  
 Catherine Brubaker  
 Youming Chen  
 Sunghwe Choi  
 Paolo Dara  
 Wei-Ting Kuo  
 Danny Lai  
 Weijing Michal  
 Diane Mues  
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 Karen Basrak<sup>‡</sup>  
*The Joseph A. and Cecile Renaud  
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 Olivia Jakyoung Huh  
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 Katinka Kleijn<sup>‡</sup>  
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*The David and Mary Winton Green  
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 Alexander Horton  
 Assistant Principal  
 Daniel Carson  
 Ian Hallas  
 Robert Kassinger<sup>‡</sup>  
 Mark Kraemer  
 Stephen Lester  
 Bradley Opland  
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 Principal Flute Chair*  
 Emma Gerstein<sup>‡</sup>  
 Jennifer Gunn

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 Piccolo Chair*

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 Principal Oboe Chair*  
 Lora Schaefer  
 Assistant Principal  
*The Gilchrist Foundation,  
 Jocelyn Gilchrist Chair*  
 Scott Hostetler

**ENGLISH HORN**

Scott Hostetler

**CLARINET**

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 Principal  
 John Bruce Yeh  
 Assistant Principal  
*The Governing Members Chair*  
 Gregory Smith

**E-FLAT CLARINET**

John Bruce Yeh

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 Principal  
 William Buchman  
 Assistant Principal  
 Miles Maner

**HORNS**

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 Principal  
 James Smelser  
 David Griffin  
 Oto Carrillo  
 Susanna Gaunt  
 Daniel Gingrich<sup>‡</sup>

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*The Adolph Herseth Principal  
 Trumpet Chair, endowed  
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 John Hagstrom  
*The Bleck Family Chair*  
 Tage Larsen

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 Principal  
*The Lisa and Paul Wiggin  
 Principal Trombone Chair*  
 Michael Mulcahy  
 Charles Vernon

**BASS TROMBONE**

Charles Vernon

**TUBA**

Gene Pokorny  
 Principal  
*The Arnold Jacobs Principal Tuba  
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**TIMPANI**

David Herbert  
 Principal  
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 Vadim Karpinos  
 Assistant Principal

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 Principal  
 Patricia Dash  
 Vadim Karpinos

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 Chris Grannen  
 Ryan Hartge  
 Peter Landry  
 Joshua Mondie

\* Assistant concertmasters  
 are listed by seniority.  
 ‡ On sabbatical  
 § On leave

The CSO's music director position  
 is endowed in perpetuity by a generous  
 gift from the Zell Family Foundation.

The Louise H. Benton Wagner chair  
 is currently unoccupied.

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra  
 string sections utilize revolving seating.  
 Players behind the first desk (first two  
 desks in the violins) change seats  
 systematically every two weeks and  
 are listed alphabetically. Section  
 percussionists also are listed alphabetically.



***Maria Manetti Shrem, Great Artist Performance Benefactor***

Born in Florence, Italy, Maria Manetti Shrem relocated to San Francisco, California, in 1972, where she played a pivotal role in the internationalization of iconic fashion brands such as Gucci and Fendi.

Together with her husband, Jan Shrem, Maria has supported over 60 charitable programs across the US, Italy, France, Mexico, Africa, and the UK, contributing to more than 45 foundations. Their philanthropy spans education, music, art, and medicine, creating meaningful social impact worldwide.

In the US, the Manetti Shrems have supported institutions such as the Metropolitan Opera in New York City, UC Davis, the San Francisco Opera, Festival Napa Valley, UC Berkeley-Cal Performances, KQED, Francisco Park, the San Francisco Symphony, SF Film, SF MoMA, ArtSmart, KDFC, and hospitals like UCSF and Sutter Health-CPMC.

In Europe, Maria has been a principal benefactor for organizations including the King's Foundation, the Royal Drawing School, Palazzo Strozzi Foundation, Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Friends of the Louvre, Friends of Versailles, the Venetian Heritage, the Italian National Trust, Museo 900, and the Andrea Bocelli Foundation, with which she helped construct four new schools, including one at the Meyer Children's Hospital.

Additionally, the Manetti Shrems are founders and lifetime members of the Cabo Jewish Center. Maria also funded a scholarship in Africa through the Global Sojourns Giving Circle, empowering the next generation of women leaders.

Maria and Jan co-founded the Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Museum of Art at UC Davis, which opened in 2016, fulfilling a 60-year legacy in the arts. The museum's collection features celebrated California artists such as Wayne Thiebaud, William T. Wiley, Robert Arneson, Roy De Forest, and Manuel Neri. Its architectural

design has been recognized by *ARTnews* as "One of the World's 25 Best Museum Buildings of the Past 100 Years."

Maria has been honored as a cultural ambassador and philanthropist. In 2019, Italian President Sergio Mattarella awarded her the Grand Officer of the Order of the Star of Italy. In 2022, the Mayor of Florence presented her with the Keys of the City for her exemplary patronage, following in the spirit of the Medici legacy. The City and County of San Francisco also declared June 22 as "Manetti Shrem Day for Philanthropy."

Maria's accolades include the inaugural Angels of the Arts Award from Festival Napa Valley, The Spirit of the Opera Award from San Francisco Opera, and the lighting of San Francisco City Hall in the Italian flag colors during "Maria—50 Years in America," a celebration of her legacy. She also received the 2023 UC Davis Medal, the highest honor from the University of California system, in recognition of her extraordinary contributions to the arts. In 2024, UC Berkeley recognized Maria and Jan as "Builders of Berkeley."

In Spring 2024, Maria made history by endowing the College of Letters and Science at UC Davis with its largest gift ever, establishing eight endowments to protect the arts and humanities in perpetuity. Her visionary donation integrates arts, humanities, science, and technology, creating a Renaissance Zeitgeist through the establishment of a dedicated Art District, inaugurated in January 2025. In recognition of her global philanthropy, Maria received the 2024 Premio StellaRe from Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo in Torino, Italy. She was honored with the 2025 Ellis Island Medal. SF Opera Guild celebrated her as person of the year 2025 with An Evening on the Stage.

Maria Manetti Shrem continues to lead with vision and generosity, shaping cultural landscape and enriching lives across the globe.