

Midwest Young Artists



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PRESS RELEASE

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Midwest Young Artists

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Yo-Yo Ma to be honored at Midwest Young Artists' Crescendo Gala

Globally celebrated cellist Yo-Yo Ma has gone above and beyond to bring creativity and innovation to the world of classical music, education and outreach in Chicago as part of his work as the Judson and Joyce Creative Consultant with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO). Ma and the CSO officially launched the Citizen Musician Initiative in 2011 to sustain and expand the role of music in civic and cultural life. Ma's vision of musicians in service of their communities has blossomed in a variety of ways: proposals for musician-led projects in neighborhoods across the city and suburbs, community activities organized where the CSO is on tour, a new fellowship program for the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, and renewed energy behind the ongoing efforts of the CSO's Institute for Learning, Access and Training to engage more people and transform lives through music. His recent work with the Civic Orchestra of Chicago includes an open rehearsal at Chicago Public School's Senn High School, a holiday pop-up performance in downtown Chicago, and an upcoming appearance at Orchestra Hall to cap the Civic's season-long artistic challenge collaboration on Richard Strauss' tone poem *Don Quixote*.

Ma will connect with many more people when he joins Midwest Young Artists (MYA) at their Crescendo Gala on Wednesday, May 21 in Chicago to receive the 2014 Golden Baton Award. The award, first given out in 2008 to CSO President Deborah Rutter, was created to honor Individuals who have made significant contributions to classical music.

"We want to recognize those that our students should view as role models and international leaders," says Dr. Allan Dennis, Executive Director of MYA.

"I can't think of anyone who fits that bill more than Yo-Yo Ma. He is seen as a world leader in music performance, is passionate about creating cultural awareness through music and is an educational advocate."

The Crescendo Gala will be held on the beautiful 30th Floor of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Building at 300 E. Randolph. We thank Blue Cross Blue Shield for its long-standing commitment to organizations that inspire and support building healthy communities. The event will begin with cocktails, appetizers and live music performed by MYA students. The cocktail hour will be followed by an elegant three-course dinner and the presentation of MYA's Golden Baton Award to Yo-Yo Ma.

All proceeds from the Gala, including generous sponsorships from Baxter, Hollister and Walgreens, will benefit the music education, scholarship and outreach programs at Midwest Young Artists, a full curriculum music school serving students aged twelve months through twelfth grade from over seventy-four communities in the Chicago area. MYA annually enrolls over 1,000 students into their Early Childhood, Choral, Jazz, Orchestra and Chamber Music Programs.

Why should one attend the Crescendo Gala? According to Dr. Dennis, "It will be a FUN event, from beautiful location to the great food and live music."

But that's not the most important part.

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“The focus of the event will be on supporting youth in music education in our communities, just as Yo-Yo Ma has done. Attending the Crescendo Gala will allow MYA to continue to further its mission to *build a home with the power of music to enrich the lives of students and the community.*”

For information about tickets or sponsorships, contact Rebecca Rudy at (847) 926-9898 or rebecca@mya.org, or visit the Midwest Young Artists website at www.mya.org.

Information about Midwest Young Artists:

Midwest Young Artists is the premier youth music education and ensemble organization in the Midwest and represents some of the best young musicians in the country. The program offers exceptional training in jazz, choral, chamber and orchestral instruction. Midwest Young Artists was founded in 1993 with just one orchestra. The organization currently reaches more than 1,000 students from over 75 communities in the metropolitan Chicago area, with students ranging in age from 12 months through 12th grade. MYA has eight youth orchestras, more than sixty-five chamber music ensembles, four choral ensembles, a full jazz program, classes in music theory and composition and an early childhood education program. Students have the opportunity to travel abroad and to perform in major venues throughout Chicago and around the world. Leading the nation in chamber music instruction, MYA graduates are accepted at the most selective conservatories, universities and colleges in the country.

Visit MYA online: www.mya.org

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