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## **RISING STARS SERIES IN MILLENNIUM PARK**

### **Four Free Concerts at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion Showcasing the Chicago Children's Choir, Midwest Young Artists, Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras and After School Matters**

The best and the brightest of Chicago's young artists will take to the stage this summer in the new **Rising Stars** series in Millennium Park. Offering an opportunity for up and coming performers to hone their craft on the stage of the Jay Pritzker Pavilion, this free series will showcase the work of the **Chicago Children's Choir**, the **Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras**, **Midwest Young Artists** and **After School Matters**. Finalists in the national Poetry Out Loud contest will open each of the four performances.

"We're delighted to be able to provide an opportunity for these gifted young artists to demonstrate their talents and show off their work in Chicago's most exciting and popular venue," said Lois Weisberg, Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs

The series kicks off on Thursday, June 12 at 6:30 p.m., when the critically acclaimed **Chicago Children's Choir** returns to Millennium Park. Renowned for stirring performances and incredible breadth of repertoire, the choir will perform international works from South Africa to Korea, a classical set with J.S. Bach's sixth motet, as well as American music including Broadway hits and the soul music of Stax Records. The Chicago Children's Choir is led by Artistic Director Josephine Lee.

The **Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras** will perform on Sunday, June 15<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m. For over sixty years the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras has provided superior orchestral training, music education and performance opportunities for young people ages 7-18. This internationally acclaimed company, led by Maestro Allen Tinkham will put on a dazzling program featuring Antonio Vivaldi's *Spring Concerto* with violinist Garry Clarke, Igor Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* and *Pictures at an Exhibition* by Modest Mussorgsky.

Then on Sunday, July 27<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m. exciting jazz and orchestra music will be performed by the extraordinarily talented youth of **Midwest Young Artists** (MYA), led by nationally renowned directors Allan Dennis and Nic Meyer. Visitors are invited to hear the music of Bernstein, Copland and Beethoven as well as jazz artists Basie and Rich in one concert. Midwest Young Artists is a leader in providing top quality ensembles for young students who are passionate about music.

The **After School Matters Showcase** rounds out the summer with a performance on Sunday, August 10<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m. Showcasing the talented teens from After School Matters gallery37 summer programs in modern and jazz dance, ballet, opera, jazz and musical theatre, this exhilarating performance is a finale to the teens' extraordinary work over the summer as apprentices of professional artists .

The skilled orations of the Poetry Out Loud contest finalists will precede each show. This national program encourages high school students to learn about great literary works while incorporating aspects of slam poetry, spoken word and theater into English classes. Finalists appearing in the Rising Stars series are from the Chicago area and Midwest.

Millennium Park is located in the heart of downtown Chicago. It is bordered by Michigan Ave. to the west, Columbus Dr. to the east, Randolph St. to the north and Monroe St. to the south. Convenient parking is located in the Millennium Park Garage (entrance on Columbus at Monroe or Randolph) and at the Grant Park North and East Monroe Garages, all located within a short walking distance to Millennium Park.

Millennium Park is an award-winning center for art, music, architecture and landscape design. The result of a unique partnership between the City of Chicago and the philanthropic community, the 24.5-acre park features the work of world-renowned architects, planners, artists and designers. Among Millennium Park's prominent features are the Frank Gehry-designed Jay Pritzker Pavilion, the most sophisticated outdoor concert venue of its kind in the United States; the interactive Crown Fountain by Jaume Plensa; the contemporary Lurie Garden designed by the team of Gustafson Guthrie Nichol, Piet Oudolf and Robert Israel; and Anish Kapoor's hugely popular Cloud Gate sculpture. Since its opening in July 2004, Millennium Park has had more than 12 million of people, making it one of the most popular destinations in Chicago.

For more information about Millennium Park, call 312.742.1168 or visit [www.millenniumpark.org](http://www.millenniumpark.org).

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