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## The Cleveland Orchestra raises \$1.1 million at annual Severance Music Center gala



André Gremillet, Helen Rankin Butler, Michelle Shan Jeschelnic, and Richard Smucker. (Photo: Aireonna McCall-Dubé)

CLEVELAND — The Cleveland Orchestra raised \$1.1 million for its artistic, education, and community engagement programs during its annual gala, held on Saturday, September 21, at Severance Music Center. The event is the Orchestra’s largest fundraising event of the year.

More than 280 guests enjoyed cocktails and conversation on the terrace before sitting down for dinner in the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Concert Hall. The elegant evening began with a French-inspired performance by The Cleveland Orchestra led by Associate Conductor Daniel Reith and featuring Milhaud’s *Le Boeuf sur le toit*, Debussy’s *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*, and Berlioz’s *Roman Carnival Overture*.

“The funds raised during this gala will make a significant impact in supporting our programs and ensuring that we continue to deliver extraordinary musical experiences and educational opportunities to our community,” said André Gremillet, the Orchestra’s President & CEO. “We are deeply grateful to our donors, whose generosity and dedication help sustain the rich tradition of excellence that defines The Cleveland Orchestra.”

Each year, The Cleveland Orchestra provides audiences with memorable, world-class concerts at its venues, Severance Music Center and Blossom Music Center, on tour, and on its digital platform, Adella. In addition, the Orchestra's education and community programs reach more than 100,000 people annually and have been a cornerstone of the institution's mission since its founding in 1918.

"It's an honor to celebrate the remarkable achievements of The Cleveland Orchestra and our treasured musicians. The success of this annual gala is a testament to Northeast Ohio's generosity and unwavering commitment to the arts," said Helen Rankin Butler and Michelle Shan Jeschelnic, co-chairs of the 2024 Gala. "We look forward to another exciting Cleveland Orchestra season, united by our shared passion for the power of music."

The Cleveland Orchestra began its 107th season with Prokofiev's "Classical" Symphony and Tchaikovsky's "Pathétique" Symphony on Thursday, September 19. Led by guest conductor Osmo Vänskä, the Orchestra was also joined by Frank Peter Zimmermann in Schumann's Violin Concerto. The new season continues Thursday, September 26, with an all-Rachmaninoff program led by conductor Elim Chan and featuring Yefim Bronfman in Rachmaninoff's Third Piano Concerto. The composer's *Symphonic Dances* round out the program. [More on the 2024–25 season here.](#)

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### **About The Cleveland Orchestra**

Now firmly in its second century, The Cleveland Orchestra, under the leadership of Franz Welser-Möst since 2002, is one of the most sought-after performing ensembles in the world. Year after year the ensemble exemplifies extraordinary artistic excellence, creative programming, and community engagement. In recent years, *The New York Times* has called Cleveland “the best in America” for its virtuosity, elegance of sound, variety of color, and chamber-like musical cohesion.

Founded by Adella Prentiss Hughes, the Orchestra performed its inaugural concert in December 1918. By the middle of the century, decades of growth and sustained support had turned the ensemble into one of the most admired around the world.

The past decade has seen an increasing number of young people attending concerts, bringing fresh attention to The Cleveland Orchestra’s legendary sound and committed programming. More recently, the Orchestra launched several bold digital projects, including the streaming platform Adella.live and its own recording label. Together, they have captured the Orchestra's unique artistry and the musical achievements of the Welser-Möst and Cleveland Orchestra partnership.

The 2024–25 season marks Franz Welser-Möst’s 23rd year as Music Director, a period in which The Cleveland Orchestra has earned unprecedented acclaim around the world, including a series of residencies at the Musikverein in Vienna, the first of its kind by an American orchestra, and a number of celebrated opera presentations.

Since 1918, seven music directors — Nikolai Sokoloff, Artur Rodziński, Erich Leinsdorf, George Szell, Lorin Maazel, Christoph von Dohnányi, and Franz Welser-Möst — have guided and shaped the ensemble’s growth and sound. Through concerts at home and on tour, broadcasts, and a catalog of acclaimed recordings, The Cleveland Orchestra is heard today by a growing group of fans around the world. [Find out more.](#)

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