

For release: September 7

## **The Cleveland Orchestra mourns passing of Music Director Laureate Christoph von Dohnányi**

CLEVELAND— The Cleveland Orchestra mourns the passing of Music Director Laureate Christoph von Dohnányi, who led the Orchestra with distinction from September 1984 to August 2002. Dohnányi passed away on September 6 at the age of 95, leaving behind a profound legacy of musical excellence, visionary leadership, and international acclaim.

"Christoph von Dohnányi was a superb conductor and Music Director, respected the world over. His storied family history gave him a unique musical perspective, and The Cleveland Orchestra was fortunate to have him in Cleveland for such a significant part of its history. Maestro Dohnányi's artistry and dedication led to a deep mutual respect with our musicians, which was felt sincerely by our audiences who had an enormous appreciation for him. We send condolences to his family and friends, and to all he touched with his music in Cleveland and beyond," said André Gremillet, President & CEO of The Cleveland Orchestra.

Dohnányi's relationship with The Cleveland Orchestra began on December 3, 1981, when he stepped onto the podium as a guest conductor. In just three short months, he was appointed as the Orchestra's sixth Music Director.

During his remarkable 18-year tenure, Dohnányi propelled the Orchestra to new artistic heights. In 1985, he presented the first fully staged opera at Blossom Music Center, the Orchestra's summer home, with a production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. He further brought the Orchestra to the world stage, most notably establishing a long-standing and cherished residency at the Salzburg Festival beginning in 1992 and leading the first tour of mainland China.

Dohnányi's tenure also marked a prolific era of recording for The Cleveland Orchestra. He recorded 109 works with the ensemble, contributing significantly to its international profile and documented artistry. His work was recognized with three Grammy Award nominations, further cementing his reputation as a conductor of exceptional musical insight.

In 1994, *Time* magazine honored the ensemble as "the best band in the land," a testament to Dohnányi's standards. One of his most enduring contributions was overseeing the

comprehensive renovation of Severance Hall beginning in 1998, transforming the historic venue into a state-of-the-art concert hall while preserving its architectural grandeur.

We are deeply grateful for Christoph von Dohnányi's extraordinary contributions to The Cleveland Orchestra and to the broader classical music world.

**###**

**Media Contact:**

Christophe Abi-Nassif, [cabinassif@clevelandorchestra.com](mailto:cabinassif@clevelandorchestra.com), 216-231-7441

Jen Steer, [jsteer@clevelandorchestra.com](mailto:jsteer@clevelandorchestra.com), 216-231-7637

Amanda Ameer, First Chair Promotion, [amanda@firstchairpromo.com](mailto:amanda@firstchairpromo.com), 212-368-5949