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June 12: Rising Stars Series in Millennium Park

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The Jay Pritzker Pavilion is hosting four free concerts 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 at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion. Admission is free.

"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 15th 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 27th 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 10th 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.