

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the 56th Mayor of Chicago Lori E. Lightfoot is proud to honor and celebrate individuals whose exceptional leadership and vision have made an enduring impact on the city of Chicago and its cultural landscape; and

WHEREAS, Blake-Anthony Johnson has demonstrated transformative leadership as President and CEO of the Chicago Sinfonietta, elevating the organization to new heights of artistic excellence, community engagement, and financial sustainability; and

WHEREAS, Blake-Anthony's appointment in March 2020 as the first Black Chief Executive of an American orchestra of the Sinfonietta's stature marked a historic milestone in the classical music world, and his visionary direction has resulted in significant growth across all facets of the Sinfonietta — from its budget and programming to its outreach and visibility within Chicago and beyond; and

WHEREAS, under Blake-Anthony's leadership, the Chicago Sinfonietta successfully moved to the prestigious Auditorium Theatre, achieving unprecedented visibility for the organization, and expanded its investment in diversity and equity, championing the inclusion of underrepresented voices in classical music; and

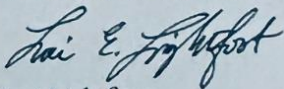
WHEREAS, Blake-Anthony's efforts have resulted in record fundraising and giving towards the Sinfonietta, enabling the organization to reach new audiences, deepen its impact, and create transformative experiences for Chicagoans of all backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his leadership at the Sinfonietta, Blake-Anthony Johnson has been recognized as a trailblazer in the cultural and business communities, being named a Chicagoan of the Year, included in Crain's Chicago Business's 40 Under 40, awarded the Black Men in Excellence Award by the Black Professionals Network, and recognized by Musical America as one of its Top 30 Professionals of the Year in 2022; and

WHEREAS, Blake-Anthony serves as co-chair of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events' Cultural Advisory Council, further solidifying his commitment to the continued growth and vibrancy of Chicago's cultural ecosystem;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Lori E. Lightfoot, 56th Mayor of the City of Chicago, do hereby celebrate December 18 as Blake-Anthony Johnson Day in the City of Chicago, in recognition of his transformative leadership, exceptional service, and lasting contributions to the Chicago Sinfonietta and the broader cultural community. I encourage all Chicagoans to join in celebrating his achievements and continued dedication to fostering diversity, inclusivity, and artistic excellence in our city.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 18 of December, 2024.



Lori Lightfoot
56th Mayor of the City of Chicago

