

# NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY

XIAN ZHANG MUSIC DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Jean-Yves Thibaudet Plays Ravel with New Jersey Symphony

NEWARK, NJ—Jean-Yves Thibaudet is set to perform with New Jersey Symphony this January. Kevin John Edusei will conduct the four performances.

The performances will take place Thursday, January 9, 2024, at 1:30 pm at New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark; Friday, January 10, 2024, at 8 pm, at Richardson Auditorium in Princeton; Saturday, January 11, 2024, at 8 pm, at New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark; and Sunday, January 12, 2024, at 3 pm, at State Theatre New Jersey in New Brunswick.

The program begins with Donghoon Shin's *Of Rats and Men*, which draws inspiration from two short stories: Franz Kafka's "Josefine, die Sangerin oder Das Volk der Mause" ("Josephine the Singer, or the Mouse Folk") and the Chilean writer Roberto Bolano's "Police Rat." Shin's piece makes use of the entire orchestra's instrumentation while maintaining a transparency that allows different layers of sound to emerge. The first half of the program closes with Ravel's Piano Concerto in G, a work built upon broad musical influences. The sprightly outer movements feature jazz and blues influences, while Ravel drew inspiration from Mozart's Clarinet Quintet for the central, beautifully simple slow movement.

The second half of the program features Sibelius' Symphony No. 2, which was composed between 1901 and 1902. Arguably Sibelius' best-known work, the Second Symphony is known for its unconventional first movement form and the stirring nationalistic hymn that forms the main thrust of the finale.

### Jean-Yves Thibaudet Plays Ravel New Jersey Symphony Classical

**Kevin John Edusei** conductor

**Jean-Yves Thibaudet** piano

**New Jersey Symphony**

**Newark** → Thursday, January 9, 1:30 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

**Princeton** → Friday, January 10, 8 pm, Richardson Auditorium

**Newark** → Saturday, January 11, 8 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

**New Brunswick** → Sunday, January 12, 3 pm, State Theatre New Jersey

**Donghoon Shin** *Of Rats and Men*

**Maurice Ravel** Piano Concerto in G

**Jean Sibelius** Symphony No. 2

More information on concerts and tickets: [njsymphony.org/events](https://njsymphony.org/events).

### About Kevin John Edusei

Highlights of Kevin John Edusei's 2024–25 season include debuts with the New York Philharmonic, Konzerthausorchester Berlin, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Taiwan Philharmonic Orchestra and at the Musikverein with the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra. His return engagements include the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra at the Concertgebouw and the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra in his final season as principal guest conductor. A strong advocate of contemporary music, Edusei's carefully curated programmes across the 2024–25 season include premieres of works by Hannah Kendall, Thomas Larcher, Samy Moussa, Brian Nabors, Derrick Skye and Gabriella Smith.

Edusei is a regular guest conductor across the world with orchestras including the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Seattle Symphony and Sydney Symphony Orchestra. He has a long-standing relationship with the Chineke! Orchestra with whom he performs this season at London's South Bank Centre, Konzerthaus Berlin, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg and at BOZAR, Brussels. Edusei is the former chief conductor of the Munich Symphony Orchestra and the Bern Opera House.

In Autumn 2022, Edusei made his debut at the Royal Opera House conducting Puccini's *La Bohème*, which was streamed across cinemas world-wide, and in 2023–24 he returned for a production of *Madama Butterfly*. Previously he has enjoyed great success with productions at the Semperoper Dresden, English National Opera, Hamburg State Opera, Volksoper Wien and Komische Oper Berlin. During his tenure at the Bern Opera House, he led highly acclaimed new productions including *Peter Grimes*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Salome*, *Bluebeard's Castle*, *Tannhäuser*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Kátya Kábanová* and a cycle of the Mozart-Da-Ponte operas.

Born in Bielefeld, Germany, Edusei studied sound engineering, classical percussion and orchestral conducting at the University of the Arts Berlin and the Royal Conservatory The Hague with Jac van Steen and Ed Spanjaard. In 2004, he was awarded a

conducting fellowship at the Aspen Music Festival by David Zinman; in 2007, he was a prize-winner at the Lucerne Festival conducting competition under the artistic direction of Pierre Boulez and, in 2008, he won the first prize of the Dimitri Mitropoulos Competition in Athens. Edusei is an alumnus of the Deutsche Bank Akademie Musiktheater heute and the Dirigentenforum of the German Music Council. He resides with his family in Munich.

[kevinjohnedusei.com](http://kevinjohnedusei.com), X: @kevinjohnedusei & Facebook: [facebook.com/kevinjohnedusei.conductor/](https://facebook.com/kevinjohnedusei.conductor/)

### **About Jean-Yves Thibaudet**

Through elegant musicality and an insightful approach to contemporary and established repertoire, Jean-Yves Thibaudet has earned a reputation as one of the world's finest pianists. He is especially known for his diverse interests beyond the classical world, including numerous collaborations in film, fashion and visual art. He is a devoted educator and the first-ever artist-in-residence at the Colburn School, which awards several scholarships in his name.

This season, Thibaudet appears in concerts and recitals around the world in works ranging from Gershwin's Concerto in F to Saint-Saëns' Piano Concerto No. 5, Liszt's Piano Concerto No. 2, Bernstein's Symphony No. 2, "Age of Anxiety" and Ravel's Piano Concerto in G. A major contemporary exponent of Aram Khachaturian's Piano Concerto, Thibaudet performs the piece with the National Symphony Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic and Tonhalle Orchestras. In Seoul, with the KBS Symphony Orchestra, he returns to Scriabin's *Prometheus: The Poem of Fire*, which he performed last season in a synesthetic presentation with olfactory cues created by Mathilde Laurent of Cartier.

In addition to his orchestral dates, Thibaudet takes part in the Itzhak Perlman and Friends tour across California and a tour of Asia with longtime collaborator Gautier Capuçon. He also performs Debussy's *Préludes* in their entirety at recitals across the United States. Other highlights include world premiere performances of two new works: Benjamin Attahir's *Hanoi Songs*, with the Seattle Symphony, and Manu Martin's *Cosmic Rhapsody*, with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra; and the return of his program with Michael Feinstein, *Two Pianos: Who Could Ask for Anything More?* in Rome and San Francisco.

A prolific recording artist, Thibaudet has appeared on more than 70 albums and six film scores; his extensive catalog has received two GRAMMY nominations, two ECHO Awards, the Preis der deutschen Schallplattenkritik, the Diapason d'Or, the CHOC du Monde de la Musique, the Edison Prize and *Gramophone* awards. Recent recordings include *Gershwin Rhapsody*, a collection of Gershwin pieces recorded with Michael Feinstein, including four newly-discovered ones; *Night After Night*, a celebration of James Newton Howard's scores for the films of M. Night Shyamalan; and *Carte*

*Blanche*, a collection of deeply personal solo piano pieces never before recorded by the pianist. He is the soloist on Wes Anderson's *The French Dispatch*; his playing can also be heard in *Pride and Prejudice*, *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close*, *Wakefield* and the Oscar-winning and critically acclaimed film *Atonement*. His concert wardrobe is designed by Dame Vivienne Westwood.

### **About New Jersey Symphony**

New Jersey Symphony is a GRAMMY and Emmy Award-winning orchestra. Under the direction of the Music Director Xian Zhang, the Symphony performs more than 60 concerts at mainstage venues across the state, including Newark, Princeton, New Brunswick, Red Bank and Morristown as well as schools and public spaces statewide. Programming at the Symphony reflects an unwavering commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion while providing students across the state unparalleled opportunities to achieve musical excellence through its Youth Orchestra and other outreach programs. In 2024, the Symphony announced it would continue to deliver its statewide activities from a new, permanent office, rehearsal and concert space in Jersey City, set to open in 2026. For more information about the New Jersey Symphony, visit our website at [njsymphony.org](https://njsymphony.org) or our newsroom for press releases and photos.

### **Connect with us**

Follow NJ Symphony on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [TikTok](#), [X](#) and [YouTube](#)

###

### **Local press**

Ali Harrison, New Jersey Symphony, Communications Manager

[aharrison@njsymphony.org](mailto:aharrison@njsymphony.org)

Geoffrey Anderson, New Jersey Symphony, VP of Marketing & External Affairs

[ganderson@njsymphony.org](mailto:ganderson@njsymphony.org)

### **National & classical music press**

Shirley Kirshbaum, Kirshbaum Associates, President

[skirshbaum@kirshbaumassociates.com](mailto:skirshbaum@kirshbaumassociates.com)

Beverly Greenfield, Kirshbaum Associates, Director of Public Relations

[bgreenfield@kirshbaumassociates.com](mailto:bgreenfield@kirshbaumassociates.com)

*Jean-Yves Thidaudet's appearance is dedicated to the memory of Stanlee and Florence Kissel.*

*The New Jersey Symphony's programs are made possible in part by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, along with many other foundations, corporations and individual donors.*