

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY

XIAN ZHANG MUSIC DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Joshua Bell named New Jersey Symphony principal guest conductor, beginning in 2025–26 season



[Media asset link](#)

NEWARK, NJ—New Jersey Symphony has announced that beginning in the 2025–26 season, Joshua Bell will serve as the Symphony’s inaugural principal guest conductor through the 2028–29 season.

Bell has had a long and fruitful relationship with the Symphony over the last three decades and appeared as soloist in the Bruch Violin Concerto No. 1 in the 2022–23 season. In the fall of 2023, Joshua led the New Jersey Symphony as soloist and conductor for the first time, in works of Beethoven and Mendelssohn—a collaborative musical week for both Bell and the orchestra's musicians that sparked the idea for this continued partnership.

Bell said of his new role, “I first played with New Jersey Symphony more than three decades ago, and they have held a special place in my heart ever since. My most recent appearance with the Symphony was particularly meaningful to me, as I had the privilege of playing *and* conducting on the program. I am thrilled to be continuing in this role as principal guest conductor for several seasons to come. I can’t wait to share the stage with my New Jersey Symphony friends in the 2025–26 season!”

Bell will appear on one program weekend each season. In addition, Bell and the Symphony are also exploring potential additional collaborations as part of the principal guest conductor role, which will be announced at a later date.

For more information about Bell's appointment, go to njsymphony.org/joshuabell.

Joshua Bell

With a career spanning almost four decades, GRAMMY Award-winning violinist Joshua Bell is one of the most celebrated artists of his era. Bell has performed with virtually every major orchestra in the world, and continues to maintain engagements as a soloist, recitalist, chamber musician, conductor and as the music director of the Academy of St Martin in the Fields.

Bell's highlights for the 2024–25 season include the release of two new albums: *Thomas De Hartmann Rediscovered*, which features the World Premiere recording of Ukrainian composer Thomas De Hartmann's Violin Concerto, with conductor Dalia Stasevska and the INSO-Lviv Orchestra, released August 16, 2024 on Pentatone, as well as an album of *Mendelssohn piano trios*, which Bell recorded with longtime friends and collaborators Jeremy Denk and Steven Isserlis, out August 30, 2024 on Sony Masterworks. Bell will rejoin Denk and Isserlis in November 2024 for a series of Fauré chamber concerts at Wigmore Hall. An avid recitalist, Bell tours internationally to South America, Australia and mainland China, and performs his beloved "Voice and the Violin" program with soprano Larisa Martínez throughout North America. As guest soloist, Bell appears with the New York Philharmonic, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, as well as conducts and plays with the DSO Berlin.

In 2011, Bell was named music director of the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, succeeding Sir Neville Marriner, who formed the orchestra in 1959. Bell has since led the orchestra on several tours and albums, most recently Bruch: Scottish Fantasy, which was nominated for a 2019 GRAMMY Award. In April 2024, the Academy announced the extension of Bell's Music Director contract through the 2027–28 season.

Bell has commissioned and premiered new works by John Corigliano, Edgar Meyer, Behzad Ranjbaran and Nicholas Maw—his recording of Maw's Violin Concerto received a GRAMMY award. In 2023–24, Bell introduced his newly commissioned concerto project, *The Elements*, a suite featuring movements by five renowned living composers: Jake Heggie, Jennifer Higdon, Edgar Meyer, Jessie Montgomery and Kevin Puts.

Bell has collaborated with peers including Renée Fleming, Daniil Trifonov, Emanuel Ax, Lang Lang, Chick Corea, Regina Spektor, Chris Botti, Anoushka Shankar, Dave Matthews, Josh Groban and Sting, among others.

As an exclusive Sony Classical artist, Bell has recorded more than 40 albums, garnering GRAMMY, Mercury®, Gramophone and OPUS KLASSIK awards. In 1998, Bell worked with composer John Corigliano on the film soundtrack for *The Red Violin*, which elevated Bell to a household name and garnered Corigliano an Academy Award. Since then, Bell has appeared on several other film soundtracks, including *Ladies in Lavender* (2004) and *Defiance* (2008). Bell has also appeared three times as a guest star on *The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson* and made numerous appearances on the Amazon series *Mozart in the Jungle*.

A strong advocate for accessible music education, Bell has received the 2022 Paez Medal of Art, bestowed by the Venezuelan American Endowment for the Arts, and the 2019 Glashütte Original Music Festival Award, presented in conjunction with the Dresden Music Festival. In 2021, Bell announced his partnership with Trala, the tech-powered violin learning app. Bell maintains additional active involvement with Education Through Music and Turnaround Arts. Bell's Virtual Violin, the result of an ongoing partnership with leading virtual instrument sampling company Embertone, is widely considered the best virtual instrument of its kind.

Born in Bloomington, Indiana, Bell began playing the violin at age 4, and at age 12, began studies with his mentor, Josef Gingold. At age 14, Bell debuted with Riccardo Muti and the Philadelphia Orchestra, and made his Carnegie Hall debut at age 17 with the St. Louis Symphony. At age 18, Bell signed with his first label, London Decca, and received the Avery Fisher Career Grant. In the following decades, Bell has been nominated for six GRAMMY awards, named "Instrumentalist of the Year" by Musical America, a "Young Global Leader" by the World Economic Forum, and has received the Avery Fisher Prize. He also received the 2003 Indiana Governor's Arts Award and in 2000 was named an "Indiana Living Legend."

Bell has performed for three American presidents and the justices of the Supreme Court of the United States. He participated in President Barack Obama's Committee on the Arts and Humanities' first cultural mission to Cuba, resulting in an Emmy-nominated PBS Live from Lincoln Center special.

Bell performs on the 1713 Huberman Stradivarius violin.

About the New Jersey Symphony

The Emmy and GRAMMY Award-winning New Jersey Symphony is redefining what it means to be a nationally leading, relevant orchestra in the 21st century. The Symphony is renewing its deeply rooted commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion by championing new, and often local, artists; engaging audiences for whom the inspiring depth and breadth of classical music will be a new experience; and incorporating the broadest possible representation in all aspects of our organization—all to better reflect and serve our vibrant communities.

Internationally renowned Chinese American conductor Xian Zhang began her tenure as the New Jersey Symphony's current music director in 2016. Since her arrival, Zhang has revitalized programming with an industry-leading commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in mainstage concerts. Since 2021, Zhang has worked together with composer, violinist, educator and social-justice advocate Daniel Bernard Roumain, the orchestra's Resident Artistic Catalyst, to offer programming that connects with diverse communities in Newark and throughout New Jersey. In 2024, Allison Loggins-Hull succeeds DBR as the orchestra's next Resident Artistic Partner.

In the 2024–25 season, the New Jersey Symphony will present Billy Childs' *Diaspora*, Daniel Freiberg's *Latin American Chronicles*, Allison Loggins-Hull's *Can You See?*, Qasim Naqvi's *God Docks at Death Harbor* and Gabriela Ortiz's *Kauyumari*. Classical favorites on the season include Ludwig van Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, "Choral," Gustav Holst's *The Planets—An HD Odyssey*, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* and Igor Stravinsky's Suite from *The Firebird*. Artistic partnerships include Paquito D'Rivera and his quintet, as part of the TD James Moody Jazz Festival; Nimbus Dance performing with *The Firebird* and *God Docks at Death Harbor*; Montclair State University Chorale performing on three programs; as well as Peking University Alumni Chorus and Starry Arts Children's Chorus appearing on the Lunar New Year Celebration concert with Xian Zhang.

For more information about the New Jersey Symphony, visit njsymphony.org or email information@njsymphony.org. Tickets are available for purchase by phone 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476) or on the Orchestra's website.

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.

Press materials

Photos and information: njsymphony.org/newsroom

Press releases: njsymphony.org/pressreleases

Connect with us

njsymphony.org

@NJSymphony on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [TikTok](#) and [X](#)

@NewJerseySymphony on [YouTube](#)

Email: information@njsymphony.org

Local press contacts

Ali Harrison

Communications Manager

New Jersey Symphony

973.735.0969

aharrison@njsymphony.org

Geoffrey Anderson
Vice President of Marketing & External Affairs
New Jersey Symphony
973.735.1713
ganderson@njsymphony.org

National press contacts

Shirley Kirshbaum
President, Kirshbaum Associates
212.222.4843 | Mobile: 917.331.1888
skirshbaum@kirshbaumassociates.com

Beverly Greenfield
Director of Public Relations, Kirshbaum Associates
bgreenfield@kirshbaumassociates.com

###