

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY

XIAN ZHANG MUSIC DIRECTOR

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New Jersey Symphony announces 2022–23 centennial season, extends Xian Zhang’s music director contract through 2027–28

Xian Zhang continues leadership as Symphony’s music director through 2027–28 season

Yo-Yo Ma and Zhang headline Centennial Gala & Concert, which features New Jersey Ballet

Guest soloists include Joshua Bell, Yefim Bronfman, Michelle Cann,
Randall Goosby, Hilary Hahn, Daniil Trifonov

Symphony gives world premieres of works by Daniel Bernard Roumain,
Steven Mackey, Chen Yi, Darryl Kubian

Former Music Directors Neeme Järvi, Jacques Lacombe, Hugh Wolff; former Assistant
Conductor Gemma New; former Interim Music Director George Manahan make return
engagements

Film concerts feature *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back*, *Jaws*,
Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows™ Part 2

Orchestra presents mainstage productions in Newark, New Brunswick,
Princeton, Red Bank and Morristown

njsymphony.org

NEWARK, NJ—The New Jersey Symphony and Music Director Xian Zhang announce the Symphony’s **landmark 2022–23 centennial season**—and an **extension of Zhang’s music director contract** through the 2027–28 season.

President & CEO Gabriel van Aalst says: “Xian’s transformative artistic leadership over the past six years has led us to this milestone centennial, and we are so proud to announce that she will continue to lead the Symphony through our 2027–28 season.”

The new season features a centennial gala and concert with **Yo-Yo Ma**; world premieres of commissions by Resident Artistic Catalyst **Daniel Bernard Roumain**, **Steven Mackey**, **Chen Yi** and New Jersey Symphony violinist **Darryl Kubian**; and appearances by **Joshua Bell**, **Yefim Bronfman**, **Michelle Cann**, **Hilary Hahn** and **Daniil Trifonov**. The centennial sees former Music Directors **Jacques Lacombe**, **Neeme Järvi** and **Hugh Wolff**; former Assistant Conductor **Gemma New** and former Interim Music Director **George Manahan** return to the New Jersey Symphony podium. The Symphony presents a trio of **blockbuster film concerts**, a **Lunar New Year Celebration** and family programs including a **gospel-inspired holiday concert** and a celebration of the **music of Bollywood**.

Zhang says: “The centennial season will be a great celebration at a much higher magnitude than anything our audience has previously experienced in our concerts. We will honor our traditions, but at the same time, do new pieces that excite our audience and our orchestra. This season, we’re featuring outstanding artists from all backgrounds, an amazing variety of music and spectacular performances that bring in visuals, film and dance. There will also be wonderful opportunities for our orchestra musicians to show off how brilliant they are.”

Centennial Gala & Special Events

Yo-Yo Ma headlines the Symphony's Centennial Gala & Concert at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark, performing Dvořák's Cello Concerto. Dancers from New Jersey Ballet join Zhang and the orchestra for Ginastera's Four Dances from *Estancia*. The gala concert opens with Wynton Marsalis' *Herald, Holler and Hallelujah*, a work the Symphony co-commissioned and premiered in January 2022.

The subscription season opens with Yefim Bronfman performing Rachmaninoff's Third Piano Concerto with Zhang at the podium. The Symphony performs the complete ballet score of Copland's *Appalachian Spring*; dancers from Nimbus Dance add original choreography to two of the weekend's performances. The program opens with a new co-commission from Jessie Montgomery.

Zhang and the Symphony close the season with Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*. Joshua Bell plays Bruch's First Violin Concerto on the program, which opens with the world premiere of a new commission from Daniel Bernard Roumain.

Returning Guest Stars

After serving as the Symphony's artist-in-residence for the 2021–22 season, Daniil Trifonov returns for Brahms' Second Piano Concerto. Other returning guest stars include Hilary Hahn, who performs Sibelius' Violin Concerto; Michelle Cann, who performs Strauss' *Burleske* for Piano and Orchestra, and George Li, who performs Rachmaninoff's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*.

World Premieres, Commissions & Works by Living Composers

To celebrate the centennial and the orchestra's New Jersey roots, the Symphony has commissioned a new work from leading New Jersey composer and frequent Symphony collaborator Steven Mackey; *RIOT* incorporates original texts by former US Poet Laureate Tracy K. Smith. The work will feature the Princeton University Glee Club, mezzo-soprano Alica Olatuja and Mackey playing an obligato electric guitar part.

Other world premieres include commissions from Chen Yi and Darryl Kubian. The new work from Kubian, who is also a New Jersey Symphony violinist, is a triple concerto for horn, trumpet and cello that will feature his Symphony colleagues—Principal Horn Chris Komer, Principal Trumpet Garth Greenup and Assistant Principal Cello Nayoung Baek.

Other living composers featured on the season include Sarah Gibson (*warp & weft*), Arvo Pärt (*Cantus in Memoriam Benjamin Britten*), Aaron Jay Kernis (Symphony No. 2) and Dorothy Chang (*Northern Star*). The orchestra performs Montgomery's *Rounds* for Piano and String Orchestra with guest Awadagin Pratt.

Returning Conductors

Beloved past music directors return to New Jersey Symphony stages with signature programs. Neeme Järvi conducts Pärt's *Cantus in Memoriam Benjamin Britten*; Still's Symphony No. 1, "Afro-American," and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4. Jacques Lacombe leads Fauré's *Requiem*, Walker's *Lilacs* and Ravel's *Le Tombeau de Couperin*. Hugh Wolff returns for Kernis' Second Symphony—a work he premiered with the Symphony in 1992—on a program that also features Ravel's *La valse*, Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 25—with pianist Richard Goode—and Beethoven's *Egmont* Overture.

Former Assistant Conductor Gemma New returns for Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*, Rachmaninoff's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* and Gibson's *warp & weft*. Past Interim Music Director George Manahan leads Mozart's Symphony No. 38, "Prague," Montgomery's *Rounds* for Piano and String Orchestra and Strauss' Suite from *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*.

Classical Highlights

The season highlights the talents of the orchestra's musicians. In addition to Kubian's Triple Concerto, the season features Concertmaster Eric Wyrick and Principal Bass Ha Young Jung performing Bottesini's Gran Duo Concertante.

Zhang conducts Mahler's Third Symphony—her favorite piece of music—with mezzo-soprano Kelley O'Connor and Montclair State University Prima Voce. Classical season highlights also include Brahms' Fourth Symphony, Prokofiev's Fifth Symphony, Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto with Randall Goosby, Bruckner's *Te Deum* and Strauss' *Don Juan* and Suite from *Der Rosenkavalier*.

Continuing a New Jersey Symphony tradition, the orchestra hosts a festive Lunar New Year Celebration in Newark to ring in the Year of the Rabbit. Another tradition returns—Zhang conducts Handel's *Messiah* with the Symphony's longtime choral partners from Montclair State University and a quartet of vocal soloists at Richardson Auditorium in Princeton and the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark.

Blockbuster Films

The Symphony performs blockbuster films with Oscar-winning John Williams scores live to picture—*Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* and *Jaws*. The orchestra also presents a "Best of John Williams" concert featuring iconic themes from the composer's most legendary film scores.

The Symphony and New Jersey Performing Arts Center cap a multi-season partnership presenting the Harry Potter Film Concert Series with the series finale, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows™ Part 2* in Concert.

Cone Composition Institute

The New Jersey Symphony Edward T. Cone Composition Institute—a partnership between the Edward T. Cone Foundation, Princeton University and the Symphony—takes place in July. Four composers will have their work rehearsed by the New Jersey Symphony and guest conductor David Robertson, participate in masterclasses with Institute Director Steven Mackey, receive feedback from Symphony musicians and participate in professional-development sessions with industry leaders. It concludes with a New Jersey Symphony performance of the participants' works at Richardson Auditorium in Princeton.

Family & Education Programs

The Symphony presents a pair of family programs at the Victoria Theater at NJPAC. "A Joyful Noise!" spotlights celebrated artists from Newark and beyond in a gospel music-inspired holiday concert. "Hooray for Bollywood!" features signature music from the Indian Hindi-language film industry.

The New Jersey Symphony Youth Orchestra gives qualified middle- and high-school students—especially Black and Latinx youth in the Greater Newark area—unparalleled opportunities to achieve personal and musical excellence. In the 2021–22 season, the program expanded to a hybrid in-person/virtual design, introducing new dimensions to the program, from composition and rhythm courses to an eclectic array of electives. In 2020–21, nearly 200 students collaborated on a yearlong creative composition project—a uniquely engaging opportunity to explore their own musical voices and shape new works drawing from all the genres that inspire them.

Concert Access

The Symphony introduces "Celebrate 100" a new free-ticket community program for residents of Newark, guaranteeing 100 tickets for each of its classical concerts at NJPAC.

The New Jersey Symphony Young Friends free membership program offers special ticket pricing for young adults between the ages of 21 and 40.

Class Pass returns for college students looking for season-long tickets. The \$25 membership allows for the member and another student guest to attend most concerts at no additional cost. Additional student ticket opportunities for single concerts will be available.

The Symphony continues to offer reduced admission to its concerts for active military, veterans, first responders and employees of corporate sponsors.

Celebrating New Jersey

Fulfilling its mission as New Jersey's statewide orchestra, the New Jersey Symphony offers mainstage concert programs in Newark, New Brunswick, Princeton, Red Bank and Morristown. Through New Jersey Symphony Everywhere, Symphony musicians perform original chamber music programs at more than 165 community events for nearly 35,000 young people and adults spanning the 21 counties of the state—in addition to programs presented virtually.

Zhang says: "This season highlights the talents within our orchestra and New Jersey. It will be very meaningful to present new works by Daniel Bernard Roumain, Steven Mackey, Jessie Montgomery, Wynton Marsalis, Chen Yi and our own Darryl Kubian—fantastic composers whose works will surely delight our audiences. Over our 100-year history, this orchestra has been shaped by wonderful conductors, and I am so happy to welcome some of my predecessor New Jersey Symphony music directors to the podium during the centennial season. This season is full of works that showcase our incredible Symphony musicians. I am so looking forward to welcoming dancers from Nimbus Dance and New Jersey Ballet and singers from Montclair State University and Princeton University to our stages this season."

Van Aalst says: "Our centennial programming highlights how we continue to expand our commitment to representing our state in all its diversity. We're thrilled to be showcasing many exciting collaborations this season, which provides an extra sense of poetry. We're especially focused on dance, and on interdisciplinary performances that subtly add new dimensions to our performances and demonstrate the ways that classical music intertwines with different aspects of our lives, what it does for us, and how it uplifts us and connects us to the world. I'm thrilled that we will partner with the Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival to bring poets to the stage as well."

Centennial Fund

To help support this momentous season and to create a foundation that advances the Symphony's commitments to access, diversity and excellence well into its next 100 years, the institution is launching the Centennial Fund. This fund will offer donors the opportunity to increase their giving with a special one-time gift to commemorate this special occasion, as well as support the Symphony's mission for years to come.

Joshua Bell will serve as the honorary chair of the New Jersey Symphony's 2022–23 Annual Fund and will also serve as a member of the Symphony's Centennial Committee.

New Jersey Symphony Board Co-Chair Ann Borowiec says: "This is an incredibly exciting time for the Symphony. The artistic excellence of Xian and our musicians is at an all-time level and we are making meaningful inroads to secure our future, attracting new audiences and continuing to advance our efforts around diversity equity and inclusion. The Centennial Fund is the perfect complement to our Annual Fund to generate the resources needed to meet our mission goals and propel us long into the future."

The world premiere by Steven Mackey is sponsored by Linda K. and William T. Walker.

Tickets

Classical subscriptions are now on sale for the 2022–23 season. Full information on ticket packages for each series and venue is available at njsymphony.org/subscribe. Subscriptions are available for purchase online or by phone at 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476). Single tickets will go on sale in August.

Centennial Season Highlights

- **Centennial Gala & Concert with Yo-Yo Ma:** Ma performs Dvořák's Cello Concerto under the baton of Music Director Xian Zhang. Dancers from New Jersey Ballet join the orchestra for Ginastera's Four Dances from *Estancia*. Wynton Marsalis' *Herald, Holler and Hallelujah*—a New Jersey Symphony commission—opens the celebratory program. (November 12.)
- **Premieres & Commissions:** Zhang conducts world premieres of New Jersey Symphony commissions from Resident Artistic Catalyst Daniel Bernard Roumain (June 9–11), Steven Mackey (*RIOT*, April 21–23), Chen Yi (June 1–4) and Darryl Kubian (Triple Concerto, March 16–19). She leads performances of co-commissions by Jessie Montgomery (October 7–9) and Wynton Marsalis (*Herald, Holler and Hallelujah*; November 12).
- **Opening Weekend with Yefim Bronfman:** Bronfman performs Rachmaninoff's Third Piano Concerto with Zhang at the podium. The Symphony performs the complete ballet score of Copland's *Appalachian Spring*; dancers from Nimbus Dance add original choreography to two of the weekend's performances. The program opens with a new co-commission from Jessie Montgomery. (October 7–9.)
- **Season Finale with Joshua Bell:** Bell joins Zhang and the Symphony for Bruch's First Violin Concerto. Zhang leads Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* and the world premiere of a new work by Resident Artistic Catalyst Daniel Bernard Roumain. (June 9–11.)
- **Contemporary voices:** Alongside the commissions from Daniel Bernard Roumain, Steven Mackey, Chen Yi) and Darryl Kubian and co-commissions by Jessie Montgomery and Wynton Marsalis, the season features music by living composers including Montgomery (*Rounds* for Piano and String Orchestra, November 17–20), Dorothy Chang (*Northern Star*, October 20–23), Aaron Jay Kernis (Symphony No. 2, December 2–4), Arvo Pärt (*Cantus in Memoriam Benjamin Britten*, March 25–26) and Sarah Gibson (*warp & weft*, April 27–30). Through the New Jersey Symphony Edward T. Cone Composition Institute, the orchestra premieres the work of four emerging composers under the baton of David Robertson (July 23, 2022).
- **Returning Symphony conductors:** Former Music Directors Neeme Järvi (March 25–26), Jacques Lacombe (March 30–April 2) and Hugh Wolff (December 2–4) return to New Jersey Symphony stages, as do former Assistant Conductor Gemma New (April 27–30) and former Interim Music Director George Manahan (November 17–20).
- **World-class soloists:** The season features performances by guest artists including Joshua Bell (Bruch's First Violin Concerto, June 9–11), Yefim Bronfman (Rachmaninoff's Third Piano Concerto, October 7–9), Michelle Cann (Strauss' *Burleske* for Piano and Orchestra, October 20–23), Richard Goode (Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 25, Dec 2–4), Randall Goosby (Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto, June 1–4), Hilary Hahn (Sibelius' Violin Concerto, January 28–29), Yo-Yo Ma (Dvořák's Cello Concerto, November 12) and Daniil Trifonov (Brahms' Second Piano Concerto, January 6–8).
- **Collaborations:** Choirs from longtime choral partner Montclair State University join the orchestra for Mahler's Third Symphony (March 3–5), Fauré's *Requiem* (March 30–April 2) and Handel's *Messiah* (December 16–18). The Princeton University Glee Club performs Steven Mackey's *RIOT* and Bruckner's *Te Deum* with the orchestra (April 21–23). The Symphony welcomes dancers from Nimbus Dance for performances of Copland's *Appalachian Spring* (October 7 & 9) and dancers from New Jersey Ballet for Ginastera's Four Dances from *Estancia* (November 12). The Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival shares dynamic contemporary poets offering dramatic readings between orchestral works by Dorothy Chang, Strauss and Brahms (October 20 & 23).
- **Iconic films live to picture:** The Symphony performs *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (May 18–21), *Jaws* (October 28–30) and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows™ Part 2* in Concert (February 4). NJPAC co-presents the February 4 performance; State Theatre New Jersey co-presents the May 21 performance.
- **Cultural celebrations & family concerts:** The Symphony celebrates diverse traditions in family-friendly programs including the orchestra's signature Lunar New Year Celebration (January 21). Family programs include a gospel music-inspired holiday extravaganza (December 3) and Bollywood celebration (May 13).
- **Statewide performances:** The New Jersey Symphony presents classical programming at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark, State Theatre New Jersey in New Brunswick, Richardson Auditorium in

Princeton, Mayo Performing Arts Center in Morristown and Count Basie Center for the Arts in Red Bank. The Symphony offers film concerts in Newark, New Brunswick, Red Bank and Morristown and presents family programs in Newark.

New Jersey Symphony

The New Jersey Symphony will redefine what it means to be a nationally leading, relevant orchestra in the 21st century. Through adventurous performances, hands-on educational experiences, and robust community programming, we encourage everyone to enjoy the power and creativity of orchestral music in all its forms. Across genres and venues, for audiences of all walks of life, we strive to bring music that's meaningful to you, to you.

As we look toward celebrating our centennial, we are renewing our 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 new; and incorporating the broadest possible representation in all aspects of our organization—all to better reflect and serve our vibrant communities.

Our expansive educational offerings—including our youth orchestra, masterclasses and virtual learning opportunities—will build the next generation of listeners and musicians and help students grow, both musically and personally. And we will continue to seek new ways to connect with all New Jerseyans, through programs that resonate with a variety of cultural and musical backgrounds, as well as digital innovations that make our orchestra accessible to anyone, anywhere, anytime.

We're *your* New Jersey Symphony, and we'll be here for you.

The safety of our patrons, musicians and staff is of the utmost importance to the New Jersey Symphony. Please visit njsymphony.org for constantly updated details focused on attendees' well-being at our performances.

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