

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEEME JÄRVI RETURNS TO NJSO PODIUM TO CONDUCT VERDI'S REQUIEM

CONDUCTOR LAUREATE CAPS OFF ITALIAN FESTIVAL WITH MASSIVE CHORAL WORK FEATURING MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY CHORALE

FRI., JAN. 29 & SUN., JAN. 31 IN NEWARK
SAT., JAN. 30 IN MORRISTOWN

Newark, NJ—Closing the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra's Italian Winter Festival with an operatic bang, NJSO Conductor Laureate **Neeme Järvi** returns to the podium to conduct **Verdi's Requiem**. Maestro Järvi concluded his tenure as NJSO Music Director last May—a tenure that, according to *The Star-Ledger*, left “an indelible mark on the orchestra—one of the country's top 20.” His return to the NJSO stage to conduct the Requiem is tantamount to his much-anticipated encores during his seasons with the Orchestra.

Joining the NJSO is the **Montclair State University Chorale**, a regular guest of the Orchestra, enhancing the feel of the “family reunion” for Maestro Järvi. Balancing intimate solo passages with towering choral settings and a powerful orchestra to balance the vocal power, Verdi's Requiem is bound to shake the Garden State.

Performances take place on Friday, January 29, (8 p.m.) and Sunday, January 31, (3 p.m.) at NJPAC in Newark and Saturday, January 30, (3 p.m.) at Morristown's Community Theatre at Mayo Center for the Performing Arts. Tickets range in price from \$20 to \$82 and are available for purchase by phone at 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476) or online at www.njsymphony.org.

The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey is a presenting sponsor of the Morristown Classical Series.

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About the Music

Verdi's reverence for poet and fellow *Risorgimento* figure Alessandro Manzoni bordered on hero worship; he regarded the poet as the brightest star in the firmament of Italian artistic genius. When Manzoni died, a grief-stricken Verdi vowed to compose a Requiem mass in his honor.

Using some segments he had written for a Requiem to honor Gioachino Rossini (who died in 1868) as a launching pad, Verdi's **Requiem** grew to operatic proportions. The *Dies Irae* is the longest movement and the work's dramatic crux. At 40 minutes, it constitutes approximately one-half the work's entire duration. Verdi's music encompasses a sufficient variety of emotions, text segments and scoring variations to make it roughly comparable to an operatic act. He suffuses the *Dies Irae* with vivid, unabashed theatricality that has an analogous impact to Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* frescoes. Indeed, the touchy issue of whether the Requiem is too dramatic—"an opera in church vestments"—has dogged this work since its premiere.

Though receiving some opposition from the Catholic Church upon its premiere in 1874, the Requiem was an immediate success and has remained immensely popular. To begin with, the music is melodious, dramatic and well crafted. Second, Verdi achieved in the Requiem the mastery of orchestration that characterizes all his final operatic masterpieces. His sense of instrumental power works with his singers, rather than against them, and also with his text to deliver a forceful and convincing musical message.

2010 Winter Festival—"Italy: Land of Song & Expression"

The NJSO celebrates Italy, a land where speech is like singing and melody flows like wine. Audiences can escape the winter cold and bask in the warmth of music by great Italian composers from Vivaldi to Verdi, along with a few musical visitors. It's a month-long voyage of exciting discoveries and welcome reunions. **Sarah Chang and The Four Seasons** opens the Winter Festival from January 8–10; **Best of ... Italian Opera** follows from January 14–17. The NJSO presents **Pines of Rome** from January 22–24.

About the Artists

Upon the completion of a critically acclaimed tenure as NJSO Music Director, the 2009–10 season marks **Neeme Järvi's** first as NJSO Conductor Laureate. His engaging presence and masterful conducting have earned him the highest honors throughout the world. He is Chief Conductor of The Hague Residentie Orchestra in the Netherlands, Music Director Emeritus of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Principal Conductor Emeritus of the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra (National Orchestra

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of Sweden), Conductor Laureate of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and First Principal Guest Conductor of the Japan Philharmonic Orchestra. Born in Tallinn, Estonia, Järvi is one of the world's busiest conductors. He has amassed a discography of more than 350 recordings on the Deutsche Grammophon, Chandos, BIS, Orfeo, EMI and BMG labels.

Many international accolades and awards have been bestowed upon him. In Estonia, these include an honorary doctorate from the Music Academy of Estonia in Tallinn, and the Order of the National Coat of Arms from the President of the Republic of Estonia. Järvi received Tallinn's first-ever ceremonial sash and coat of arms insignia, and he has been named one of the "Estonians of the Century."

The **Montclair State University Chorale** is the 150-member core mixed-voice choral ensemble of the John J. Cali School of Music in the College of the Arts under the direction of Heather Buchanan, director of Choral Activities at the university. The somatically based choral pedagogy is designed to enable students to expand and refine their musical, vocal and choral skills. Previous highlights with the NJSO include *Carmina Burana* with Jacques Lacombe, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with Neeme Järvi and the New York Metropolitan area premiere of Howard Shore's Academy Award-winning *The Lord of the Rings Symphony*.

Jennifer Casey Cabot's 2009–10 season includes performances as Giulietta in *Casanova's Homecoming* (Minnesota Opera) and as soloist in Handel's *Messiah* (Nashville Symphony) and Mahler's Symphony No. 2 (Oberlin Conservatory of Music). Recent highlights include appearances as Ellen Orford in *Peter Grimes* (San Diego Opera) and Konstanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (Minnesota Opera debut), as well as performances with the Columbus and National Symphony Orchestras. In concert she has performed Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, Mahler's Symphonies No. 4 and No. 8 and Mozart's *Exsultate, Jubilate*. She has sung Mozart's Mass in C Minor with the Masterwork Chorale, an all-Mozart program with the Saint Louis Symphony and Strauss' *Four Last Songs* and Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas Brasileiras* with the Norwalk Symphony. Cabot is featured on Naxos's eight-volume collection of Charles Ives songs in the "American Classics" series.

Elizabeth Bishop's 2009–10 season engagements include performances as Waltraute and Second Norn in *Götterdämmerung*, Meg Page in *Falstaff* and Gertrude in *Hamlet* for Washington National Opera and Amneris in *Aida* with Atlanta Opera; she is soloist in Verdi's Requiem with the Utah Symphony and Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* with the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra. Last season she sang Second Norn at the Metropolitan Opera and Verdi's Requiem with the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra. She performed as Ma Joad in *The Grapes of Wrath* with the Pittsburgh Opera

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and Magdalene in *Der Meistersinger* at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. Recent highlights include appearances with Los Angeles Opera.

Richard Clement recently earned acclaim for the title role of Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* with the North Carolina Symphony and Sacramento Choral Arts Society and Orchestra. He premiered Theofanides' *The Here and Now* with the Atlanta Symphony, and he is among the most in-demand tenors for Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. He has appeared as Belmonte in Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* with the National Symphony, Rachmaninoff's *The Bells* with the Colorado Symphony and *Carmina Burana* with the Detroit Symphony. He was a Tanglewood Music Festival Fellow and garnered the Richard Tucker Music Foundation Jacobson Study Grant. Grammy Award-winning recordings include Britten's *War Requiem* with the Washington Choral Society and Bartók's *Cantata Profana* with the Atlanta Symphony.

In 2009–10 **Kevin Burdette** returns to the Metropolitan Opera in Strauss' *Elektra* and Shostakovich's *The Nose*, sings Osmin in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at Teatro Colón, Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* with the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra and Bartolo in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* with the Knoxville Opera. Recent highlights include Le Notaire in *L'Île de Merlin* at the Spoleto Festival, Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* with Boston Baroque, Mustafà in *L'italiana in Algeri* and Masetto in *Don Giovanni* with Seattle Opera and "Time" in Gerald Barry's *The Triumph of Beauty and Deceit* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. With the New York City Opera, he has performed the Sergeant in *The Pirates of Penzance*, Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte*, Sirocco in *L'Étoile*, Pallante in *Agrippina* and Angelotti in *Tosca*. He was Claudius in *Agrippina* with L'Opéra de Montréal and Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Chicago Opera Theater.

The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra

The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra is comprised of some of the country's finest musicians. The Orchestra is proud to have Jacques Lacombe as its Music Director Designate and Neeme Järvi as its Conductor Laureate. Artistic excellence, innovative programming and community engagement are hallmarks of its mission. To best serve the people of New Jersey, the orchestra brings its programs to seven different venues throughout the state. Education and outreach programs enrich the listening experience for children and adults alike. The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra Broadcast Series, presented in part by the Merck Company Foundation, is a syndicated radio program broadcast regionally and throughout North America. Continental Airlines is the official airline of the NJSO.

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

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