

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PRESENTS ALL-GERSHWIN POPS PROGRAM



**GERALD STEICHEN CONDUCTS FAVORITES INCLUDING
AN AMERICAN IN PARIS, SELECTIONS FROM *PORGY AND BESS* AND
GIRL CRAZY, 'EMBRACEABLE YOU' AND MORE**

STATE THEATRE CO-PRESENTS NEW BRUNSWICK PERFORMANCE

**FRI, APR 19 AT STATE THEATRE IN NEW BRUNSWICK
SAT, APR 20 AT NJPAC IN NEWARK**

NEWARK, NJ (March 22, 2013)—The **New Jersey Symphony Orchestra** presents an **all-Gershwin NJSO POPS program** in New Brunswick and Newark, April 19–20. Conductor **Gerald Steichen** returns to the NJSO stage to conduct the Orchestra in Gershwin favorites including *An American in Paris*, *Cuban Overture* and selections from *Porgy and Bess* and *Girl Crazy*, along with songs from the composer's rich canon.

Soprano **Katrina Thurman** and baritone **Jim Weitzer** join Steichen and the Orchestra on stage for songs including "I Got Rhythm," "Embraceable You," "Someone to Watch Over Me" and "'S Wonderful."

Performances take place on Friday, April 19, (8 pm) at the State Theatre in New Brunswick and Saturday, April 20, (8 pm) at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) in Newark. The April 19 performance is presented in collaboration with the State Theatre.

The NJSO presents its annual fundraising gala, **Spring into Music**, on Saturday, April 20, at NJPAC. The event—“An Evening of Gershwin”—includes cocktails, dinner and a silent auction, followed by the NJSO POPS concert. **New Jersey Governor Chris Christie and First Lady Mary Pat Christie** are honorary gala chairs.

CONCERT TICKETS

Concert tickets start at \$20 and are available for purchase online at www.njsymphony.org, by phone at 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476) or in person. The NJSO ticket office is located at 60 Park Place, 9th floor, in Newark; tickets are available by phone or in person Monday–Friday, 9 am to 5 pm. Tickets are also available, by phone only, on concert-weekend Saturdays, 11 am to 5 pm. Tickets are also available from the State Theatre ticket office online at www.StateTheatreNJ.org, by phone at 732.246.SHOW (7469) or in person. The State Theatre ticket office is located at 15 Livingston Ave in New Brunswick—hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 10 am to 6 pm; Wednesday, 11 am to 7 pm; Saturday, 1 to 5 pm, and at least three hours prior to curtain on performance dates unless otherwise specified.

FOOD DRIVE

The NJSO is partnering with The Community FoodBank of New Jersey to fight hunger. At NJSO subscription concerts in April, the Orchestra and volunteers will collect non-perishable food items to donate to The Community FoodBank, which assists more than 900,000 people in 18 counties across New Jersey. Patrons can bring food donations to the concert hall and drop off items at a collection table in the lobby. More details, a full list of concerts at which the Orchestra will collect food donations and a list of acceptable food items are available at www.njsymphony.org/fooddrive.

SPRING INTO MUSIC GALA EVENT ON APRIL 20 AT NJPAC

The annual fundraising gala’s honorees are **PNC**—represented by **NJSO trustees Daria Placitella and Linda Bowden**—and **NJSO life trustee Robert C. Waggoner and his wife, Mary Ellen**. The Orchestra recognizes the honorees for their extraordinary support of and dedication to the NJSO and the arts, education and community development in New Jersey.

All proceeds from the gala event will support the NJSO as it enriches lives through outstanding artistic, music education and community engagement programs. For further event information or to purchase tickets, packages or journal ads, contact Alice Golembo, Senior Manager of Special Events, at 973.735.1729 or agolembo@njsymphony.org.

THE PROGRAM

'S Wonderful! 'S Marvelous! Gershwin!

Friday, April 19, at 8 pm | State Theatre in New Brunswick

Saturday, April 20, at 8 pm | NJPAC in Newark

Gerald Steichen, conductor

Katrina Thurman, soprano

Jim Weitzer, baritone

New Jersey Symphony Orchestra

The April 19 performance is presented in collaboration with the State Theatre.

THE ARTISTS

Gerald Steichen, conductor

With a career that ranges from symphony to opera and Broadway to chamber music, conductor Gerald Steichen has established himself as one of America’s most versatile musicians. He serves as Music Director of the Ridgefield (Connecticut) Symphony, Principal Pops Conductor of the Utah Symphony and Associate Conductor of the New Haven Symphony Orchestra. He has conducted the Boston Pops, New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, Columbus Symphony and Oklahoma City Philharmonic. Internationally, Steichen has led the NDR, NRK and the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestras.

For New York City Opera, Steichen has led *La bohème*, *The Elixir of Love*, *The Mikado*, *Dead Man Walking* and *The Little Prince*. He has appeared with the New Jersey Opera Theatre and the Utah, Glimmerglass, Anchorage and Yale Operas. He serves as Artistic Director of Opera East Texas.

Steichen played the role of Manny the Accompanist in the Tony Award-winning Broadway production of *Master Class*. He toured nationally with *The Phantom of the Opera*, *The Secret Garden* and *Peter Pan*. He spent two years conducting the Broadway production of *Cats*, leading the final public performance of that show.

The Tonkawa, Oklahoma, native holds degrees from Northern Oklahoma College, Oklahoma City University and the University of Southern California.

Katrina Thurman, soprano

Praised for her “silvery, floating soprano,” soprano Katrina Thurman is one of the most promising talents of her generation, captivating audiences and critics alike with her distinctively beautiful voice, powerful stage presence and sensitive artistry.

This season, Thurman premieres *Mrs. President* with Anchorage Opera, sings Rosabella in *Most Happy Fella* with Tulsa Opera and appears in Rachmaninoff’s *The Bells* with the Danbury Symphony.

Recent engagements include appearances as Hanna Glawari in *The Merry Widow* with Shreveport Opera, Gilda in *Rigoletto* with Sacramento Opera, Maria in *The Sound of Music* with Anchorage Opera, Yum-Yum in *The Mikado* with Syracuse Opera and Sophie De Palma in Terrence McNally’s *Master Class* with Alpine Theater Project; she covered Eurydice in Telemann’s *Orpheus* with New York City Opera.

She has appeared with the Tulsa, Utah, Sacramento and Piedmont Operas; Cincinnati, Utah and Omaha Symphonies; Lyrique en Mer; Lyric Opera of Kansas City and Florida Grand Opera. She performed as a soloist in a concert honoring the 20th anniversary of Glimmerglass Opera’s Young American Artists Program and the New York Festival of Song.

She made her French opera debut as Najade in *Ariadne auf Naxos* with Opéra de Lyon and her critically acclaimed German debut with Oper Bonn in Janáček’s *From the House of the Dead*. She was Martha in the world premiere of Louis Karchin’s *Romulus* (recorded on the Naxos label) with American Opera Projects and the Guggenheim Museum’s *Works & Process* series. She was principal soloist in the European premiere of *The Opera Show*, which toured Spain and Italy.

Thurman is an alumna of the Young American Artists Program at Glimmerglass Opera and the Aspen Opera Theater Center. She was the Silver Medalist at the 2011 American Traditions Competition, was First Place and Audience Choice Award winner in the 2008 Classical Singer Competition and has received awards from the Jensen Foundation, National Opera Association, Connecticut Opera Guild, William C. Byrd Foundation, Anna Sosenko Assist Trust and Schuyler Foundation for Career Bridges.

Jim Weitzer, baritone

Baritone Jim Weitzer makes his New Jersey Symphony Orchestra debut. He has worked with conductor Gerald Steichen for over a decade, most notably in Japan with the Tokyo Symphony. Weitzer is currently appearing as Andre in Broadway’s *The Phantom of the Opera*, a role he also performed at the show’s recent 25th Anniversary Gala. He has previously performed the role of Raoul in *The Phantom of the Opera* both on Broadway and the national tour.

Weitzer toured nationally with *My Fair Lady*, playing the role of Freddy Eynsford-Hill opposite Marla Schaffel. Other New York credits include roles on Broadway in *Little Women* (performing the role of John Brooke and appearing on the original cast recording) and at the New York Musical Theatre Festival as the Baron in *Unlock’d*, as well as *Jerry Springer – The Opera* and *Showboat* at Carnegie Hall, among others.

Regional credits includes roles as Billy Crocker in *Anything Goes* for Kansas City Starlight, opposite Rachel York; Cliff in *Cabaret* for Drury Lane Oakbrook and Vinnie in *Once ... in New Jersey* for Marriott Lincolnshire, among others. He attended Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois.

For high-resolution artist photos, full bios and program notes, visit www.njsymphony.org/pressroom.

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. 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 outstanding venues throughout the state. Education and community engagement programs enrich the listening experience for children and adults alike. Select performances of the NJSO are broadcast regionally and throughout North America.

For more information about the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, visit www.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 Orchestra's programs are made possible in part by The New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, along with many other foundations, corporations and individual donors. United is the official airline of the NJSO.

STATE THEATRE

The State Theatre is a premier nonprofit venue for the performing arts and entertainment. The theater exists to enrich people's lives, contribute to a vital urban environment and build future audiences by presenting the finest performing artists and entertainers and fostering lifetime appreciation for the performing arts through education. The State Theatre's programs are made possible in part by funding from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, and contributions from numerous corporations, foundations and individuals.

PRESS CONTACT

National & NYC Press Representative:

Dan Dutcher, Dan Dutcher Public Relations | 917.566.8413 | dan@dandutcherpr.com

New Jersey Symphony Orchestra Press Representative:

Victoria McCabe, NJSO Communications and External Affairs | 973.735.1715 | vmccabe@njsymphony.org

State Theatre Press Representative:

Kelly Blithe, State Theatre Director of Public Relations | 732.247.7200, ext. 542 | kblithe@statetheatrenj.org

###