

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



**New Jersey Symphony Orchestra  
releases live recording  
of Verdi's *Requiem*  
Music Director Jacques Lacombe  
conducts Verdi's masterwork  
Featured artists include Montclair State  
University Chorale, quartet of  
outstanding vocal soloists  
*Recorded April 2014 at NJPAC in Newark***

NEWARK, NJ (November 12, 2014)—Music Director Jacques Lacombe and the NJSO will release a live album of the Orchestra's critically acclaimed April 2014 performance of Verdi's *Requiem* with the Montclair State University Chorale and a quartet of outstanding vocal soloists: soprano Marianne Fiset, mezzo-soprano Janara Kellerman, tenor Russell Thomas and bass Peter Volpe.

The NJSO's self-produced recording costs \$20 per CD. It will be available at NJSO concerts beginning November 29; it is currently available to preorder online at [www.njsymphony.org/verdiCD](http://www.njsymphony.org/verdiCD) or by phone at 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476).

In April, *The Star-Ledger* hailed the Orchestra's *Requiem* performance: "From the first notes, the rendition effectively conveyed the work's gravitas, with deep, rich weighty sound in the opening halting chords that created a feeling of being stunned by divine power and mortality ... [Soprano Marianne Fiset], the chorus and the orchestra mustered a shattering final climactic outpouring of sound evoking the cosmic before returning to a simple, unison chant, taking the work touching back to a humble, human realm."

*Superconductor* also praised the NJSO's performance of the masterwork: "What is needed [to perform Verdi's *Requiem*] is an absolute, unshakable faith in the power of voice and orchestra to deliver dramatic thrills equivalent of any staged opera ... Leading the struggle was Mr. Lacombe, [who] brought details of this score into sharp focus, emphasizing the texture of the work and always choosing to luxuriate in the more lyric passage of the score."

Verdi's *Requiem*—recorded April 3, 2014, at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark—will be the second recording the NJSO has released under the baton of Lacombe. The music director's lauded NJSO 2008 debut performance of *Carmina Burana* is also available on a CD released in 2010. That recording garnered a 10/10 rating from *Classics Today*, which praised a performance "so superb—so lively, accurate, cleanly recorded, and handsomely played—that its action-movie, apocalyptic aspects are matched by its introspective moments."

The NJSO recording was engineered and produced by Tim Martyn and Karl E. Held. Martyn, a four-time Grammy Award recipient, garnered the 2014 Grammy for Best Engineered Classical Album for a recording of Maria Schneider's "Winter Morning Walks" with Dawn Upshaw, the Australian Chamber Orchestra and Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra.

## **VERDI'S REQUIEM**

Recorded April 2014 at NJPAC in Newark

Jacques Lacombe, conductor

Marianne Fiset, soprano

Janara Kellerman, mezzo-soprano

Russell Thomas, tenor

Peter Volpe, bass

Montclair State University Chorale | Heather J. Buchanan director

New Jersey Symphony Orchestra

VERDI            *Requiem*

Press reviews and audience feedback on the performance are available on the program's [Concert Coda](#) page.

## **THE ARTISTS**

### **Jacques Lacombe, conductor**

A remarkable conductor whose artistic integrity and rapport with orchestras have propelled him to international stature, Jacques Lacombe has been Music Director of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra since 2010 and Orchestre Symphonique de Trois-Rivières since 2006. He was previously Principal Guest Conductor of the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal and Music Director of orchestra and opera with the Philharmonie de Lorraine.

Lacombe has garnered critical praise for his creative programming and bold leadership of the NJSO. *Time Out New York* has named the Orchestra's acclaimed Winter Festivals "an eagerly anticipated annual event" for the innovative concert experiences that have included a realization of Scriabin's "color organ," collaborations with theater and dance troupes and presentations of Tan Dun concertos in which clay pots and water become solo instruments. *The New York Times* wrote that "It was an honor to be in the hall" for Lacombe and the NJSO's performance of Busoni's Piano Concerto at the 2012 Spring for Music Festival at Carnegie Hall.

Recently, Lacombe helmed a pair of unique initiatives through the New Jersey Roots Project: the NJSO launched the inaugural NJSO Edward T. Cone Composition Institute for young composers—a week of intense compositional evaluations and consultations that culminated in a live performance of the participants' works—and gave the world premiere of Cone's Symphony in a special lecture-concert. Other 2014–15 NJSO highlights include the "Sounds of Shakespeare" Winter Festival, featuring collaborations with violinist Sarah Chang and the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey.

In July, Lacombe made his Tanglewood Music Festival debut with the Boston Symphony Orchestra; this season, he returns to the Deutsche Oper Berlin for productions of *Carmen*, *The Damnation of Faust* and *Samson and Delilah*; L'Opera de Monte Carlo for Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and Vancouver Opera for *Carmen*.

He has appeared with the Cincinnati, Columbus, Québec, Toronto, Vancouver and New Zealand Symphony Orchestras and National Arts Centre Orchestra of Ottawa. He frequently conducts in France, Spain and Australia and has led tours and recordings with the National Youth Orchestra of Canada.

Opera highlights include all-star productions of *La Bohème* and *Tosca* at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden and numerous productions with the Deutsche Oper Berlin and Metropolitan Opera, as well as engagements at opera houses in Marseille, Strasbourg, Turin and Munich. He has recorded for the CPO and Analekta labels; he has recorded Orff's *Carmina Burana* and Janáček's Suite from *The Cunning Little Vixen* with the NJSO. His performances have been broadcast on PBS, the CBC, Mezzo TV and Arte TV, among others.

Born in Cap-de-la-Madeleine, Québec, Lacombe attended the Conservatoire de Musique de Montréal and Hochschule für Musik in Vienna. He was named a Chevalier de l'Ordre national du Québec in 2012 and a Member of the Order of

Canada—among the highest civilian honors in the country—in 2013. More information is available at [www.jacqueslacombe.com](http://www.jacqueslacombe.com).

### **Marianne Fiset, soprano**

Since soprano Marianne Fiset was awarded five top prizes from the Montreal International Music Competition, including the First Grand Prize and People's Choice Award, she has been hailed by critics and audiences alike.

She sang the role of Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* for the operas of Tours and Reims and Verdi's *Requiem* with the Orchestre symphonique de Trois-Rivières in 2013. She reprises the role of Donna Elvira for her debut in Wuppertal, Germany, in the fall of 2014. She has had great success as Mimi in *La Bohème* for the Sankt Margarethen Opernfestspiele in Austria and the Calgary, Vancouver, Tampa and Montreal opera companies. She recently covered the role of Mimi at the Metropolitan Opera and will perform and record Honegger and Ibert's *L'Aiglon* for the Montreal Symphony. Concert engagements have taken her to Madrid, Toronto, Quebec City and Washington, DC, for such works as Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, Verdi's *Requiem* and Mahler's Symphony No. 4.

### **Janara Kellerman, mezzo-soprano**

Mezzo-soprano Janara Kellerman is quickly making a name for herself among opera lovers and critics alike. Recent performances include her role debut as Santuzza in *Cavalleria rusticana* with Music Viva Hong Kong, the Old Lady in *Candide* with Fresno Grand Opera, Little Buttercup in *H.M.S. Pinafore* with Opera Saratoga and Lyric Opera San Antonio, *Zemire und Azor* with the Liederkrantz Oper, a return to New York City Opera for its production of *Antony and Cleopatra* and a concert tour in Switzerland.

Concert performances have included Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 in her Avery Fisher Hall debut, Azucena in *Il Trovatore* in concert with the Westfield Symphony, Mahler's Second Symphony with Dubuque Symphony Orchestra and the soloist in a concert with the Continuo Arts Foundation.

### **Russell Thomas, tenor**

A native of Miami, tenor Russell Thomas is quickly establishing himself as one of the most exciting vocal and dramatic talents on the international opera and concert scene. Recent engagements include concert performances of Adams' *Gospel According to the Other Mary* at the Ravinia Festival, Verdi's *I Masnadieri* with Washington Concert Opera, the title role of Verdi's *Don Carlos* in his Deutsche Oper Berlin debut, Andres in *Wozzeck* with the Metropolitan Opera, the title role in *The Tales of Hoffmann* with the Seattle Opera and the Prince in *Rusalka* with Opera North Carolina.

Thomas is an alumnus of the prestigious Lindemann Young Artist Development Program of the Metropolitan Opera. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree in performance from the New World School of the Arts.

### **Peter Volpe, bass**

American bass Peter Volpe continually receives critical and popular acclaim on four continents. Possessing a vast and ever-expanding repertoire of more than 80 roles in six languages, he is noted for his captivating style and interpretive skill.

Recent engagements include Marquis of Calatrava and Guardiano (cover) in *La forza del destino* with Washington National Opera, Philip II in *Don Carlos* with Vancouver Opera and Austin Lyric Opera, Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Portland Opera and an all-Verdi concert with the Washington Chorus at the Kennedy Center. Volpe made his notable Metropolitan Opera debut in its new production of Prokofiev's *War and Peace* and has returned for Berlioz's *Les Troyens*, Strauss' *Salome*, Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*, *Falstaff*, *Gianni Schicchi*, *Romeo et Juliette*, *Aida*, *I Vespri Siciliani*, *Cyrano di Bergerac*, *Andrea Chenier* and *Carmen*.

### **Montclair State University Chorale | Heather J. Buchanan director**

Montclair State University Chorale is the core choir in the John J. Cali School of Music. The Chorale comprises music students majoring in performance, music education, music therapy and composition, as well as non-music majors. Their accompanist is Steven W. Ryan. Previous NJSO highlights include Howard Shore's Academy Award-winning *The Lord of*

*the Rings Symphony*, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and Verdi's epic *Requiem* under the baton of Neeme Järvi. The Chorale's highly acclaimed performances of Orff's *Carmina Burana* with Jacques Lacombe were celebrated with a limited-edition CD release in September 2011.

In May 2011, the women of the Chorale performed Mahler's Symphony No. 3 with the NJSO and the American Boy Choir. Other Chorale highlights include requiems by Fauré and Duruflé, Poulenc's *Gloria*, Britten's *Saint Nicholas*, Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem* and the regional premiere of *Parables* for the 2011 Crawford Concert in collaboration with the MSU Symphony Orchestra.

Australian-born conductor Heather J. Buchanan, PhD, is professor of music and director of choral activities at Montclair State University, where she conducts the Chorale, University Singers and Vocal Accord. Choirs under her direction have won critical acclaim and have collaborated with world-renowned artists including Meredith Monk, Richard Alston, Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, Tarik O'Regan and Chen Yi. Buchanan is co-editor and compiler of the landmark GIA Publications choral series *Teaching Music through Performance in Choir* and has released a DVD, *Evoking Sound: Body Mapping & Gesture Fundamentals*.

A licensed Andover educator, Buchanan specializes in the teaching of body mapping for musicians and holds degrees from the University of New England in Australia, Westminster Choir College of Rider University and the Queensland Conservatorium at Griffith University in Australia. A vibrant teacher, dynamic performer and passionate advocate for musicians' health, she is in demand as a guest conductor, somatic educator and choral clinician in the United States and abroad.

### **THE NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

Named "a vital, artistically significant musical organization" by *The Wall Street Journal*, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra embodies that vitality through its statewide presence and critically acclaimed performances, education partnerships and unparalleled access to music and the Orchestra's superb musicians.

Under the bold leadership of Music Director Jacques Lacombe, the NJSO presents classical, pops and family programs, as well as outdoor summer concerts and special events. Embracing its legacy as a statewide orchestra, the NJSO is the resident orchestra of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark and regularly performs at the State Theatre in New Brunswick, Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank, Richardson Auditorium in Princeton, Mayo Performing Arts Center in Morristown and bergenPAC in Englewood. Partnerships with New Jersey arts organizations, universities and civic organizations remain a key element of the Orchestra's statewide identity.

In addition to its lauded artistic programming, the NJSO presents a suite of education and community engagement programs that promote meaningful, lifelong engagement with live music. Programs include the three-ensemble NJSO Youth Orchestras, school-time Concerts for Young People performances and multiple offerings—including the El Sistema-inspired NJSO CHAMPS (Character, Achievement and Music Project)—that provide and promote in-school instrumental instruction as part of the NJSO Academy. The NJSO's REACH (Resources for Education and Community Harmony) chamber music program annually brings original programs—designed and performed by NJSO musicians—to a variety of settings, reaching as many as 17,000 people in nearly all of New Jersey's 21 counties.

For more information about the NJSO, visit [www.njsymphony.org](http://www.njsymphony.org) or email [information@njsymphony.org](mailto: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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