

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



JACQUES LACOMBE MUSIC DIRECTOR

National & NYC Press Contact: Dan Dutcher Public Relations
Dan Dutcher | 917.566.8413 | dan@dandutcherpr.com

New Jersey Press Contact:
Victoria McCabe, NJSO Communications and External Affairs
973.735.1715 | vmccabe@njsymphony.org
www.njsymphony.org/pressroom

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Jersey Symphony Orchestra presents Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and Jennifer Higdon's *blue cathedral*



***NJSO Accents include BEATS afterparty at Newark's Hotel Indigo,
College Night at State Theatre and Prelude Performance***

Thu, Nov 5, at NJPAC in Newark

Fri, Nov 6, at NJPAC in Newark

Sat, Nov 7, at State Theatre in New Brunswick

Sun, Nov 8, at NJPAC in Newark

NEWARK, NJ (October 2, 2015)—The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and Music Director Jacques Lacombe present Beethoven's iconic Ninth Symphony and Jennifer Higdon's *blue cathedral*, November 5–8 in Newark and New Brunswick. NJSO Accents include BEATS—a post-concert party at the Hotel Indigo in Newark—on Friday, November 6, and the first College Night of the season on Saturday, November 7, at the State Theatre in New Brunswick.

Performances take place on Thursday, November 5, at 1:30 pm; Friday, November 6, at 8 pm and Sunday, November 8, at 3 pm at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark and Saturday, November 7, at 8 pm at the State Theatre in New Brunswick.

The Orchestra welcomes a quartet of celebrated vocalists for Beethoven's Ninth Symphony: soprano Barbara Shirvis, mezzo-soprano Elizabeth Bishop, tenor Jonathan Boyd and baritone Stephen Powell. The Westminster Symphonic Choir, under the baton of Joe Miller, returns to NJSO stages.

Music Director Jacques Lacombe says: "We performed Beethoven's Ninth Symphony at the beginning of my first season as NJSO music director, so we come full circle with this program. Beethoven's symphonies pair very well with contemporary music, and Jennifer Higdon's beautiful *blue cathedral* is a fantastic opener for the Ninth. *blue cathedral* has a lot of textures; Jennifer has a very personal sense of orchestral colors. The piece is very ethereal—it inspires you to think about life and meditate, as you would do in a big cathedral. It sets you in a mood where you feel good within yourself, and that's the best way to be able to set up this powerful message from Beethoven."

Critics have praised Higdon's deeply personal work. *The Philadelphia Inquirer* writes: "*blue cathedral* is a potent experience, awash in facile orchestrations and an engaging sense of journey." *The New York Times* has called Higdon's music "imaginative, richly orchestrated and accessible."

TICKETS

Concert tickets start at \$20 and are available for purchase online at www.njsymphony.org or by phone at 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476).

BEATS

After the November 6 performance at NJPAC in Newark, the NJSO hosts a post-concert bash with dancing, an open bar for the first hour and late-night noshes party at the trendy Hotel Indigo rooftop. DJ Anthony will spin electronic dance beats to classical hits.

Tickets are \$69; the package includes admission to the November 6 concert, entry to the BEATS party, one hour of open bar, late-night noshes and complimentary shuttle service from NJPAC to Hotel Indigo after the concert and to Military Park Garage after the party. More information is available at www.njsymphony.org/beats.

COLLEGE NIGHT

The NJSO hosts its first College Night of the season on Saturday, November 7, at the State Theatre in New Brunswick. A special \$10 student ticket includes entrance to the Orchestra's 8 pm performance and a post-concert all-student party.

The NJSO will provide free round-trip bus transportation to the concert from select New Jersey college campuses. Pick-up times and locations will be posted at www.njsymphony.org/college as buses become available.

The Orchestra has set aside a block of tickets as Tweet Seats, from which college students can post live concert commentary on social media. The NJSO ([@NJSymphony](https://twitter.com/NJSymphony)) will join the Twitter conversation during the performance.

The NJSO will host a second College Night this season at its February 27 performance at NJPAC in Newark.

CONCERT PROGRAM

Beethoven's Ninth

Thursday, November 5, at 1:30 pm | NJPAC in Newark

Friday, November 6, at 8 pm | NJPAC in Newark

Saturday, November 7, at 8 pm | State Theatre in New Brunswick

Sunday, November 8, at 3 pm | NJPAC in Newark

Jacques Lacombe, conductor

Barbara Shirvis, soprano
Elizabeth Bishop, mezzo-soprano
Jonathan Boyd, tenor
Stephen Powell, baritone
Westminster Symphonic Choir | Joe Miller, director
New Jersey Symphony Orchestra

HIGDON *blue cathedral*
BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 9

This concert is performed without intermission.

Full concert information and program notes are available at www.njsymphony.org/events/detail/beethovens-ninth.

The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey is concert sponsor of the November 6 performance.

NJSO ACCENTS

Inspired by the concerts and designed to inspire audiences, NJSO Accents are pre- or post-concert events that complement the concert experience and provide audience members with more opportunities to personally connect with the music and music makers.

Prelude Performance—Thu, Nov 5, before the concert

Enjoy live music in the lobby, spotlighting young musicians from the NJSO Academy.

BEATS—Sat, Nov 6, after the concert

Join us at the trendy Hotel Indigo rooftop for a post-concert bash with dancing, an open bar for the first hour and late-night noshes throughout the night. Reservations are required.

www.njsymphony.org/beats

College Night—Sat, Nov 7, after the concert

\$10 tickets for college students include the concert and a post-concert party with refreshments and live entertainment.

www.njsymphony.org/college

Learn more at www.njsymphony.org/accents.

The Prudential Foundation generously sponsors NJSO Accents in Newark.

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 of the Orchestre Symphonique de Trois-Rivières since 2006. After his finale season with the NJSO, he takes up the post of Chief Conductor of the Bonn Opera in Germany. 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 leadership of the NJSO. *Time Out New York* has named the Orchestra's acclaimed Winter Festivals "an eagerly anticipated annual event" for their innovative content. *The New York Times* wrote, "It was an honor to be in the hall" for Lacombe's NJSO performance of Busoni's Piano Concerto with Marc-André Hamelin at the 2012 Spring for Music Festival at Carnegie Hall.

Lacombe began the 2015–16 season with the opening of the 75th season of the Tanglewood Music Festival in an All-American concert with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. In addition to NJSO engagements, this season, Lacombe leads

Werther with Juan Diego Florez, Joyce Di Donato and the Orchestre National de France; as well as introductory performances in Taiwan and Peru and his debut in Bonn with von Reznicek's *Holofernes*.

Last season, Lacombe launched the NJSO Edward T. Cone Composition Institute for young composers, which grew out of the New Jersey Roots Project he introduced in his first season with the Orchestra. Recent NJSO highlights include the "Sounds of Shakespeare" Winter Festival, featuring both violinist Sarah Chang and the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey; the theater company returns for the festival this January.

Lacombe appears regularly with the Deutsche Oper Berlin and at L'Opera de Monte Carlo. He has conducted several productions at the Metropolitan Opera and Royal Opera House at Covent Garden, as well as with opera companies in Vancouver, Turin, Marseille, Munich and Philadelphia.

He has appeared with the Cincinnati, Columbus, Québec, Toronto, Vancouver, Ottawa, and New Zealand Symphony Orchestras. This season, he returns to orchestras in Nice and Mulhouse, France, and debuts with orchestras in San Antonio, Omaha and Nancy, France.

Lacombe has recorded for the CPO and Analekta labels; he has recorded Verdi's *Requiem*, 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 in 2013—among the highest civilian honors in the country.

Barbara Shirvis, soprano

In the summer of 2015, Barbara Shirvis sang in a concert of opera arias with baritone Stephen Powell and the Boston Landmarks Orchestra. This season, she returns to the Wichita Symphony Orchestra in Verdi's *Requiem*.

Recent concert engagements include Strauss' Four Last Songs and Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 and *Ah! perfido* with North Carolina Symphony; Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 and Vaughan Williams' *Serenade to Music* with Wichita Symphony; Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* and Mahler's Symphony No. 4 with Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra; Britten's *War Requiem* with American Choral Directors' Association; Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with Rochester Philharmonic and Phoenix Symphony Orchestra; Dvořák's *Requiem* with Florida Orchestra and Poulenc's *Stabat Mater* and Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass* with New Mexico Symphony.

Opera highlights include the title role in *Manon Lescaut* with Chautauqua Opera; title role in *Tosca* and Rosalinda in *Die Fledermaus* with Minnesota Orchestra; Cio-Cio San in *Madama Butterfly* with Aspen Festival and Desdemona in *Otello*, Liù in *Turandot*, Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* and Countess in *The Marriage of Figaro* with Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra.

Elizabeth Bishop, mezzo soprano

Elizabeth Bishop's 2015–16 season includes engagements as Fricka in *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* in a return to Washington National Opera, and Verdi's *Requiem* with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. In 2014–15, she sang Mother Marie in *Dialogues of the Carmelites* with Washington National Opera, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and *Messiah* with the Winston-Salem Symphony.

Recently, she returned to the Metropolitan Opera in *La sonnambula* and *I puritani*, Washington National Opera as Brangäne in *Tristan und Isolde*, Pittsburgh Opera as Amneris in *Aida*, and New Jersey Symphony Orchestra in Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*. She sang Berlioz' *The Damnation of Faust* with Richmond Symphony, Mahler's Symphony No. 3 with Detroit Symphony Orchestra and Verdi's *Requiem* with New Hampshire Music Festival, and she debuted with Boston Symphony Orchestra at Tanglewood as Amneris.

Career highlights include Fricka in *Das Rheingold*, Iphigenia in *Iphigenia in Tauris*, Mother Marie in *Dialogues of the Carmelites* and Venus in *Tannhäuser* with the Metropolitan Opera, as well as Offred in the North American premiere of Ruder's *The Handmaid's Tale* with Minnesota Opera.

Jonathan Boyd, tenor

Tenor Jonathan Boyd continually performs to great acclaim throughout Europe, North America and South America. This season, he reprises the role of Romeo in Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet* in a co-production appearing with Opera Carolina, Virginia Opera, Toledo Opera, Opera Grand Rapids and Lyric Opera Baltimore.

Notable recent engagements include his debut as Peter Quint/Prologue in *Turn of the Screw* at Théâtre du Capitole in Toulouse, Frank Shallard in *Elmer Gantry* for Florentine Opera of Milwaukee, Tamino in *The Magic Flute* with Opera Colorado, Tom Rakewell in *The Rake's Progress* for both Portland Opera and Teatro Municipal de Santiago in Chile and a Scottish National Opera debut as the title role in *Werther*.

In concert, Boyd performed Britten's *War Requiem* with Orquesta Filarmónica de Bogotá, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with Opéra de Rouen Haute Normandie, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Mozart and Salieri* with Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, *Elijah* with Fort Worth Symphony and Mozart's *Solemn Vespers* at Carnegie Hall.

The Corning, New York, native began his apprenticeship with Florentine Opera of Milwaukee and since has returned in numerous roles. More information is available at www.jonathanboyd-tenor.com.

Stephen Powell, baritone

This season, Stephen Powell sings Germont in *La Traviata* with Opera Company of Philadelphia and Scarpia in *Tosca* with Minnesota Opera, has his first performances as Macbeth with Michigan Opera Theatre and premieres a work by Jonathan Leshnoff with Kansas City Symphony. In summer of 2015, he sang Alphonse in *The Favorite* in a return to Caramoor Festival and Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* with Minnesota Orchestra.

Concert highlights include Brahms' *Requiem* with St. Louis Symphony, *Carmina Burana* with the Cleveland Orchestra and New Jersey and Atlanta symphony orchestras, Mahler's Symphony No. 8 in Zurich (CD released on RCA Red Seal), Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder* at the Montreux Festival, *Messiah* with Philadelphia Orchestra and San Francisco Symphony, Faure's *Requiem* with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, *Belshazzar's Feast* with the Houston Symphony and Britten's *War Requiem* with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

Opera highlights include Scarpia with the Colorado Symphony Orchestra, Count di Luna in *Il trovatore* with the Cincinnati Opera, Sharpless with the San Francisco Opera, Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with the Los Angeles Opera, Tonio in *I Pagliacci* with San Diego Opera, the title role in *Rigoletto* and Rodrigue in *Don Carlos* at the Caramoor Festival, Amonasro in *Aida* with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and *Simon Boccanegra* in Warsaw.

Westminster Symphonic Choir

Recognized as one of the world's leading choral ensembles, the Westminster Symphonic Choir has recorded and performed with major orchestras under many internationally acclaimed conductors of the past 81 years. Prepared for this performance by Westminster Director of Choral Activities Joe Miller, the choir is composed of students at Westminster Choir College.

The ensemble's 2015–16 season includes performances of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with the Berliner Philharmoniker, conducted by Simon Rattle; Handel's *Messiah* with the New York Philharmonic, conducted by Jane Glover; Mahler's Symphony No. 8 with The Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin; and works by MacMillan and Fauré, conducted by Joe Miller.

Westminster Choir College is a division of Rider University's Westminster College of the Arts, which has campuses in Princeton and Lawrenceville. A professional college of music with a unique choral emphasis, Westminster prepares students at the undergraduate and graduate levels for careers in teaching, sacred music and performance.

In addition to his responsibilities at Westminster Choir College, **Joe Miller** is artistic director for choral activities for the renowned Spoleto Festival USA.

Jennifer Higdon

Composer Jennifer Higdon is a major figure in contemporary Classical music, receiving the 2010 Pulitzer Prize in Music for her Violin Concerto and a 2010 Grammy for her Percussion Concerto.

Higdon enjoys several hundred performances a year of her works, and *blue cathedral* is one of America's most performed contemporary orchestral works, with more than 500 performances worldwide since its premiere in 2000. Her works have been recorded on nearly 50 CDs.

Higdon has written an opera based on the best-selling novel, *Cold Mountain*, by Charles Frazier, which was premiered by the Santa Fe Opera in August 2015. Higdon holds the Rock Chair in Composition at The Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. Her music is published exclusively by Lawdon Press.

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 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, along with many other foundations, corporations and individual donors.

PRESS CONTACT

National & NYC Press Representative:

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

Regional Press Representative:

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