

Bank of America sponsors seven 2016–17 New Jersey Symphony Orchestra concerts



Key NJSO partner continues multi-season support

Programs include Xian Zhang's first New Brunswick performance as NJSO Music Director, season-finale concerts in Red Bank and Newark

Oct 29–June 11

NEWARK, NJ (October 20, 2016)—Bank of America will sponsor seven New Jersey Symphony Orchestra concerts in the 2016–17 season, including Xian Zhang's October 29 debut as NJSO Music Director in New Brunswick, as well as the Orchestra's final two performances of the season, June 10–11. The seven performances, all under Zhang's baton, span concerts at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark, State Theatre New Jersey in New Brunswick and Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank.

NJSO President & CEO Gabriel van Aalst says: "We are thrilled that Bank of America adds to its multiyear legacy of supporting many of the Orchestra's most artistically and institutionally significant programs, starting this season's concert sponsorship with Xian Zhang's first New Brunswick performance as Music Director. Our organizations share a commitment to fostering thriving communities, and we are grateful for Bank of America's continued partnership as we fulfill our mission to serve audiences across the state."

A multi-season NJSO partner, Bank of America sponsored previous Music Director Jacques Lacombe's final concerts in each NJSO venue across the state last season. The institution also sponsored violin superstar Sarah Chang's multidimensional two-week 2015 Winter Festival residency—the first of its kind for the NJSO.

Bob Doherty, New Jersey president of Bank of America, says: "Bank of America supports arts and cultural programs that engage audiences and strengthen communities, and as our state orchestra, the NJSO is a key contributor to New Jersey's cultural vibrancy and economic vitality. We are proud to continue our relationship with the Orchestra and welcome Xian Zhang to New Jersey for her first season as NJSO Music Director."

Bank of America is concert sponsor of the following performances:

- Sat, Oct 29, at 8 pm | State Theatre New Jersey in New Brunswick
[Xian Zhang Debuts as Music Director](#)
- Sat, Feb 25, at 8 pm | Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank
[Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto](#)
- Sat, Mar 25, at 8 pm | NJPAC in Newark
[Zhang Conducts Beethoven's Seventh](#)
- Sat, Apr 8, at 8 pm | State Theatre New Jersey in New Brunswick
[Ravel's Boléro](#)

- Sun, Apr 9, at 3 pm | NJPAC in Newark
[Ravel's Boléro](#)
- Sat, June 10, at 8 pm | Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank
[Season Finale with Zhang and Bronfman](#)
- Sun, June 11, at 3 pm | NJPAC in Newark
[Season Finale with Zhang and Bronfman](#)

TICKETS

Tickets for these NJSO concerts start at \$20 and are available for purchase online at www.njsymphony.org or by phone at 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476).

MUSIC DIRECTOR XIAN ZHANG

Conductor Xian Zhang begins her critically anticipated tenure as NJSO Music Director in the 2016–17 season. Zhang is internationally renowned for “dynamic performances [that prove] hers is a name worth memorizing” (*The New York Times*) and “dynamism, agility and precision” (*The Telegraph*). WQXR placed her arrival in New Jersey in the top two of 2016’s classical stories to watch, and *The Star-Ledger* calls the conductor “a thrilling leader who has already established a strong rapport with the orchestra.”

Zhang has served as Music Director of Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano Giuseppe Verdi since September 2009, with highlights including their televised debut at the BBC Proms in 2013 with Joseph Calleja. This season, Zhang takes on the position of Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC National Orchestra and Chorus of Wales (BBC NOW), thereby becoming the first female conductor to hold a titled role with a BBC orchestra.

A regular conductor with the London Symphony and Royal Concertgebouw orchestras, Zhang’s recent highlights include debuts with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg and Orquesta y Coro Nacionales de España, as well as performances with the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, BBC NOW at the BBC Proms and Orchestre National de Belgique, where she will appear again this season.

Recent operatic performances include a return to English National Opera conducting *La Bohème* and her debut with Den Norske Opera conducting *La Traviata*. Following Zhang’s hugely successful production of *Nabucco* with Welsh National Opera in 2014, which subsequently transferred to the Savonlinna Festival, she returned to the festival in summer 2016 to conduct *Otello*—marking her debut with the opera company itself.

Zhang frequently returns to her native China, where she is a regular conductor with the China Philharmonic and the Beijing and Guangzhou symphony orchestras. A champion for Chinese composers, she conducted Qigang Chen’s *Iris Devoilee* with the BBC NOW and National Centre for the Performing Arts, where she will return in 2017. She led the world premiere of Qigang Chen’s *Luan Tan* with the Hong Kong Philharmonic—a work commissioned by the orchestra—and the West Coast premiere of Tan Dun’s *The Triple Resurrection* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Working with young talented musicians continues to play a major part in Zhang’s life. She has been Artistic Director of the NJO Dutch Orchestra and Ensemble Academy since 2011, and last summer she made her hugely successful debut with the European Union Youth Orchestra, conducting them in Grafenegg, Amsterdam, Berlin, Rheingau and Bolzano.

Born in Dandong, China, Zhang made her professional debut conducting *The Marriage of Figaro* at the Central Opera House in Beijing at the age of 20. She trained at Beijing’s Central Conservatory, earning both Bachelor and Master of Music degrees, and she served one year on its conducting faculty before moving to the United States in 1998. She was appointed the New York Philharmonic’s Assistant Conductor in 2002, subsequently becoming their Associate Conductor and the first holder of the Arturo Toscanini Chair. She studied at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music’s DMA orchestral conducting program with Mark Gibson for two years and later served on its conducting faculty before joining the New York Philharmonic.

Learn more about Zhang at www.njsymphony.org/zhang.

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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.

The NJSO welcomes new Music Director Xian Zhang in the 2016–17 season. The Orchestra 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 New Jersey 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 school-time Concerts for Young People performances, NJSO Youth Orchestras family of student ensembles and El Sistema-inspired NJSO CHAMPS (Character, Achievement and Music Project). 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. In the 2015–16 season, Orchestra musicians performed at nearly 200 events, reaching more than 34,000 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 at 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.

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