

New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and Music Director Xian Zhang present Beethoven's Seventh Symphony



Shostakovich's First Piano Concerto features pianist Lukáš Vondráček, NJSO Principal Trumpet Garth Greenup

Program also features Prokofiev's Classical Symphony

NJSO Accents include Riffs theremin performance by Darryl Kubian

Thu, Mar 23, at NJPAC in Newark

Fri, Mar 24, at Richardson Auditorium in Princeton

Sat, Mar 25, at NJPAC in Newark

Sun, Mar 26, at Mayo Performing Arts Center in Morristown

NEWARK, NJ (February 17, 2017)—Acclaimed Music Director Xian Zhang and the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra present Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, March 23–26 in Newark, Princeton and Morristown. Lukáš Vondráček, who garnered praise for his NJSO debut in 2013, returns for Shostakovich's First Piano Concerto, which also features NJSO Principal Trumpet Garth Greenup. The program also includes Prokofiev's Classical Symphony.

Performances take place on Thursday, March 23, at 1:30 pm and Saturday, March 25, at 8 pm at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark; Friday, March 24, at 8 pm at the Richardson Auditorium in Princeton, and Sunday, March 26, at 3 pm at the Mayo Performing Arts Center in Morristown.

Zhang leads the Orchestra in one of Beethoven's most enduring symphonies; the Seventh's second movement gained new mainstream cultural prominence as the score to the climactic scene of Oscar-winning film *The King's Speech*. Prokofiev's aptly named Classical Symphony draws inspiration from Haydn.

In his first appearances with the NJSO, Vondráček "showed all the hallmarks of a piano powerhouse: the imposing sound, the authority as he blazed through breakneck runs and intricate passages, the sense of nothing held back," *The*

Star-Ledger wrote. The pianist returns to New Jersey stages for a dramatic work Shostakovich originally envisioned as a double concerto with trumpet; Greenup performs the trumpet's prominent role.

NJSO Accents include Riffs, beginning one hour before the concert on March 23. NJSO violinist Darryl Kubian, an accomplished theremin player, performs a set on the ethereal instrument. The event is free for ticketholders.

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).

THE PROGRAM

Zhang Conducts Beethoven's Seventh

Thursday, March 23, at 1:30 pm | NJPAC in Newark

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Saturday, March 25, at 8 pm | NJPAC in Newark

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Xian Zhang, conductor

Lukáš Vondráček, piano

Garth Greenup, trumpet

New Jersey Symphony Orchestra

PROKOFIEV Classical Symphony

SHOSTAKOVICH Piano Concerto No. 1

BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 7

Full concert information is available at www.njsymphony.org/events/detail/zhang-conducts-beethovens-seventh.

The March 24 performance is generously sponsored by Novo Nordisk. The March 25 performance is generously sponsored by Bank of America.

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.

Riffs—Thu, Mar 23, before the concert

NJSO Violinist Darryl Kubian is also an accomplished theremin player, one of the most unusual instruments you'll ever encounter. Here, he sets aside the violin and performs a set on this most ethereal of instruments. Free for ticketholders.

NJSO Accents in Newark are generously sponsored by the Prudential Foundation.

ZHANG'S DEBUT SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

Upcoming highlights of Xian Zhang's first season as NJSO Music Director include performances of Schubert's Ninth Symphony, "Great," and Sibelius' Violin Concerto with violinist Jennifer Koh (May 11–14). She also leads a program featuring Ravel's *Bólero*, Vaughan Williams' Tuba Concerto with Principal Tuba Derek Fenstermacher, Saint-Saëns' *Carnival of the Animals* and Tan Dun's Internet Symphony No. 1, "Eroica" (Apr 7–9).

Zhang closes her first season at the helm of the NJSO with a blockbuster finale that pairs Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony with Brahms' Second Piano Concerto featuring pianist Yefim Bronfman (June 8–11).

The full season calendar is available at www.njsymphony.org/events.

THE ARTISTS

Xian Zhang, conductor

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 Cleveland Orchestra, 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. Zhang 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. 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.

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

Lukáš Vondráček, piano

Winner of the 2016 International Queen Elisabeth Piano Competition, Lukáš Vondráček made his first public appearance at age 4. He debuted with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra and Vladimir Ashkenazy as a 15-year-old in 2002, then embarked on a major US tour in 2003. His natural and assured musicality and remarkable technical ability have long marked him as a gifted and mature musician. He has worked with conductors including Paavo Järvi, Gianandrea Noseda, Marin Alsop, Christoph Eschenbach, Pietari Inkinen, Vasily Petrenko, Jakub Hrůša, Anu Tali, Xian Zhang, Krzysztof Urbanski, Stéphane Denève and Alexander Lazarev.

Highlights of the 2016–17 season include concerts with The Philadelphia Orchestra, Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestre national de Belgique, Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg, Orquesta de Gran Canaria, St. Petersburg Philharmonic and Orchestre Philharmonique Royal de Liège. He tours Brazil and India and appears in recital in Hong Kong, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Prague's Rudolfinum and Klavier-Festival Ruhr.

Following studies at the Academy of Music in Katowice and the Vienna Conservatoire, Vondráček obtained an artist diploma from Boston's New England Conservatory under the tutelage of Hung-Kuan Chen, graduating with honors in 2012. He released his first commercial recording, a solo album for Octavia Records, followed by another recital disc. His most recent recording, featuring works by Brahms, was released in autumn 2013 on the ORF label.

Garth Greenup, trumpet

New Jersey Symphony Orchestra Principal Trumpet Garth Greenup won second prize in the prestigious Ellsworth Smith/International Trumpet Guild Solo Competition in 1998. Before joining the NJSO, he served as principal trumpet of the Charleston Symphony Orchestra.

Greenup has appeared as a soloist with several ensembles, including the NJSO, Utah Symphony and Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra. More recently, Greenup performed as a soloist with the NJSO in Arutiunian's Trumpet Concerto, Herman Bellstedt's *Napoli* and Haydn's Trumpet Concerto. Greenup attended Arizona State University and Northwestern University. His principal teachers include David Hickman, Vince Chickowicz, Adolph Herseth and George Recker.

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). NJSO musicians annually perform original chamber music programs at nearly 200 community events in a variety of settings through the NJSO's REACH (Resources for Education and Community Harmony) program. The Orchestra's ECE programs annually serve more than 60,000 New Jerseyans in nearly 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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