

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



XIAN ZHANG MUSIC DIRECTOR



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Jersey Symphony Orchestra presents famous duets and solos of Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong



Vocalist Marva Hicks and trumpeter Byron Stripling perform “Love is Here to Stay,” highlights from Gershwin’s *Porgy and Bess* and more NJSO Accents include pre-concert dancing with Nostalgia: The Big Band Spring into Music Gala is Apr 22 at NJPAC in Newark

State Theatre New Jersey co-presents New Brunswick performance

Fri, Apr 21, at Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank

Sat, Apr 22, at NJPAC in Newark

Sun, Apr 23, at State Theatre New Jersey in New Brunswick

NEWARK, NJ (March 9, 2017)—The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra presents famous duets and solos of Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong, including “Love is Here to Stay,” “Just One of Those Things” and highlights from Gershwin’s *Porgy and Bess*, April 21–23 in Red Bank, Newark and New Brunswick. Vocalist Marva Hicks and trumpeter Byron Stripling bring Armstrong and Fitzgerald’s legendary partnership to life; Lee Musiker conducts.

Performances take place on Friday, April 21, at 8 pm at the Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank; Saturday, April 22, at 8 pm at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark and Sunday, April 23, at 3 pm at the State Theatre New Jersey in New Brunswick. State Theatre New Jersey co-presents the April 23 performance. The NJSO’s annual Spring into Music Gala includes the April 22 performance, plus pre-concert cocktails, dinner and a silent auction.

NY Theatre Guide writes that Stripling and Hicks “capture the respective spirits and channel certain characteristics of the musicianship of both Armstrong and Fitzgerald, while at the same time making these songs refreshingly and completely their own.”

Audience members can dance to the sounds of Nostalgia: The Big Band in the concert-hall lobby beginning one hour before the April 22 and 23 performances. These popular NJSO Accent events are free for ticketholders.

TICKETS

Concert tickets start at \$20. Tickets are available from the NJSO online at www.njsymphony.org, by phone at 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476) or in person. The NJSO Patron Services 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, and concert Saturdays, 11 am to 5 pm.

Tickets for the April 23 performance are also available at the State Theatre New Jersey ticket office online at www.StateTheatreNJ.org, by phone at 732.246.SHOW (7469) or in person. The State Theatre New Jersey ticket office is located at 15 Livingston Ave in New Brunswick. Hours are Monday–Friday, 10 am to 6 pm; Saturday, 1 to 5 pm, and at least three hours prior to curtain on performance dates unless otherwise specified.

SPRING INTO MUSIC GALA

The NJSO hosts its annual Spring into Music Gala on Saturday, April 22, at NJPAC in Newark. The event includes cocktails, dinner, a silent auction and the Ella & Louis concert. The gala honors NJSO Trustee and Hackensack Meridian Health Co-Chief Executive Officer Robert C. Garrett, who has championed the NJSO’s hospital-based Music and Wellness Program. All proceeds from the gala event will support the NJSO as it enriches lives through its artistic, music education and community engagement programs.

More information about the gala is available at www.njsymphony.org/spring.

CONCERT PROGRAM

Ella & Louis

Friday, April 21, at 8 pm | Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank

Saturday, April 22, at 8 pm | NJPAC in Newark

Sunday, April 23, at 3 pm | State Theatre New Jersey in New Brunswick

Byron Stripling, trumpet

Marva Hicks, vocalist

Lee Musiker, conductor

New Jersey Symphony Orchestra

The April 21 & 22 concerts are generously sponsored by Delta Dental. The April 23 performance is presented in collaboration with State Theatre New Jersey.

Additional information is available at www.njsymphony.org/events/detail/ella-louis.

NJSO ACCENTS

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.

Pre-Concert Festivities—Sat, Apr 22, and Sun, Apr 23, one hour before the concert

Come early and dance to the sounds of Nostalgia: The Big Band. Free for ticketholders.

NJSO Food Drive—all concerts

Non-perishable food items will be accepted at all performances for donation to local food banks. [More info](#).

Learn more at www.njsymphony.org/accents.

The Prudential Foundation sponsors NJSO Accent events in Newark.

THE ARTISTS

Byron Stripling, trumpet

A powerhouse trumpeter gifted with a soulful voice, Byron Stripling has delighted audiences internationally. As soloist with the Boston Pops Orchestra, Stripling has performed frequently under the baton of Keith Lockhart and has been a featured soloist on the PBS television special “Evening at Pops” with Lockhart and conductor John Williams. Currently, Stripling serves as artistic director and conductor of the highly acclaimed, award-winning Columbus Jazz Orchestra.

Since his Carnegie Hall debut with the New York Pops, Stripling has emerged as one of America’s most popular symphony pops guest artists. He has performed with more than 100 orchestras around the world, including the National Symphony and the orchestras of Pittsburgh, Detroit, Seattle, Baltimore, Dallas, Minnesota, Detroit, Vancouver, Toronto and Dallas. He has been a featured soloist at the Hollywood Bowl and performs at jazz festivals throughout the world.

An accomplished actor and singer, Stripling was chosen to star in the lead role of the Broadway-bound musical *Satchmo*. He was educated at the Eastman School of Music and the Interlochen Arts Academy. More information is available at www.byronstripling.com.

Marva Hicks, vocalist

Marva Hicks is a seasoned and versatile performing artist. Born in Petersburg, Virginia, she grew up singing in the church founded by her grandfather. She earned a bachelor’s degree from Howard University’s College of Fine Arts, and she received her first record deal while still a student at Howard.

Hicks was recently seen on Broadway in the box-office-record-breaking show *Motown: The Musical* in the roles of Esther Gordy and Gladys Knight. Recently, she added to her credits New York City Center’s production of *Little Shop of Horrors* starring Jake Gyllenhaal and Ellen Greene and appeared as Mrs. Potts in The Muny’s production of *Beauty and the Beast*.

Hicks traveled the world as a backing vocalist with Stevie Wonder, and she had a top-10 R&B hit, “Never Been in Love Before,” on Polygram Records. She also has worked with Whitney Houston, James Ingram, Chaka Khan and toured with Michael Jackson on his HIStory tour. Her television credits include “L.A. Law,” “Star Trek: Voyager,” “Mad About You” and “House of Cards.” More information is available at www.marvahicks.com.

Lee Musiker, conductor

Lee Musiker is a Grammy and Emmy Award-winning pianist, conductor, music director, arranger, orchestrator and composer. He has collaborated with premier artists in the classical, operatic, Broadway, jazz and pop music genres, including Joshua Bell, Tony Bennett, Andrea Bocelli, Chris Botti, Michael Bublé, Kristin Chenoweth, Judy Collins, Barbara Cook, Michael Feinstein, Renée Fleming, Lady Gaga, Josh Groban, Marvin Hamlisch, Marilyn Horne, Diana Krall, Jerry Lewis, Seth MacFarlane, Wynton Marsalis, Audra McDonald, Maureen McGovern, Bernadette Peters, Buddy Rich, Sting, Barbra Streisand, James Taylor, Mel Tormé and Dawn Upshaw.

Musiker has guest conducted the New York Philharmonic and Baltimore, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Houston, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh and National symphony orchestras. He is a Steinway artist and has performed with the New York Philharmonic, New York City Ballet, American Ballet Theater, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and Atlanta, Cleveland, Hollywood Bowl, Philadelphia, San Francisco and London symphony orchestras; as well as the New York, Boston, Cincinnati and Philly Pops. He has served on the faculties of the Mannes School of Music, The New School and New York University, and he has given masterclasses at the Metropolitan Opera and Indiana University.

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.

STATE THEATRE NEW JERSEY

The State Theatre New Jersey 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 New Jersey’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.

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