

NJSO presents world premiere of Richard Danielpour concerto alongside works by Tchaikovsky and Haydn



Sara Daneshpour performs world premiere of Danielpour's *Carnival of the Ancients* for Piano and Orchestra

Quartet of NJSO musicians take center stage for Haydn's *Sinfonia concertante*

Music Director Xian Zhang conducts program that also features Tchaikovsky's *Francesca da Rimini* and selections from *Sleeping Beauty*

NJSO Accents include 'Sunday Afternoon Out' LGBTQ event, Classical Conversations, musician talkback, food drive

Fri, Mar 9, at NJPAC in Newark

Sat, Mar 10, at Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank

Sun, Mar 11, at State Theatre New Jersey in New Brunswick

NEWARK, NJ—In a program anticipating major themes of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra's recently announced 2018–19 season, the NJSO and Music Director Xian Zhang present the world premiere of Richard Danielpour's *Carnival of the Ancients* for Piano and Orchestra alongside works by Tchaikovsky and Haydn, March 9–11 in Newark, Red Bank and New Brunswick.

With Tchaikovsky's *Francesca da Rimini* and selections from *Sleeping Beauty* and the Danielpour concerto, the program, like many in the 2018–19 "Music Speaks" season, features music inspired by storytelling plus introduces a new work to NJSO audiences. The program also celebrates the artistic talent within the Orchestra, as a quartet of NJSO musicians takes center stage for Haydn's *Sinfonia concertante*.

Performances take place on Friday, March 9, at 8 pm at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark; Saturday, March 10, at 8 pm at the Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank; and Sunday, March 11, at 3 pm at State Theatre New Jersey in New Brunswick.

Pianist Sara Daneshpour joins the Orchestra for Danielpour's concerto—a work written for her. *Carnival of the Ancients* is the third Danielpour world premiere the NJSO has presented in recent seasons, following *The Wounded Healer* (Concerto for Percussion and Orchestra) in 2016 and *Kaddish* for Violin and Orchestra with Gil Shaham in 2012. (The Orchestra also co-commissioned his Clarinet Concerto for Anthony McGill in 2014.)

The composer writes: “[*Carnival of the Ancients*] is really a series of ‘Persian Miniatures.’ The first three movements reflect images and stories from the *Shahnameh*, or Book of Kings, an ancient Persian book of fables. The last movement, ‘The Poets’ Invention,’ is an image of my own invention in which the spirits of the great Persian poets Rumi, Hafez and Khoyam dance the dance of whirling dervishes in paradise.”

Haydn's *Sinfonia concertante* features NJSO Concertmaster Eric Wyrick, Principal Cello Jonathan Spitz, Principal Oboe Robert Ingliss and Principal Bassoon Robert Wagner.

Zhang has noted her affinity for Tchaikovsky, and press have praised her performances of his work. In November, NJ Advance Media wrote, “[Zhang] opened her tenure here just over a year ago with a concert of all-Tchaikovsky and her efforts with the romantic, Russian composer's music continue to impress.”

The NJSO hosts Sunday Afternoon Out, with a post-concert reception for LGBTQ community members and friends, on March 11. The reception is free to ticketholders, but advance reservations are required. More information is available at www.njsymphony.org/lgbtq.

Other NJSO Accent events include a post-concert talkback about the orchestral audition process with a panel of NJSO musicians on March 9, as well as Classical Conversations beginning one hour before the March 10 and 11 performances.

The Orchestra hosts its annual food drive and will collect non-perishable food donations at all performances. More information is available at www.njsymphony.org/fooddrive.

Concert tickets start at \$20 and are available for purchase online at www.njsymphony.org or by phone at 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476). To register for the Sunday Afternoon Out event, use promo code SUNDAYOUT.

THE PROGRAM

Zhang Conducts Tchaikovsky

Fri, Mar 9, at 8 pm | NJPAC in Newark

Sat, Mar 10, at 8 pm | Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank

Sun, Mar 11, at 3 pm | State Theatre New Jersey in New Brunswick

Xian Zhang, conductor

Sara Daneshpour, piano

Eric Wyrick, violin

Jonathan Spitz, cello

Robert Ingliss, oboe

Robert Wagner, bassoon

New Jersey Symphony Orchestra

TCHAIKOVSKY Selections from *The Sleeping Beauty*

DANIELPOUR *Carnival of the Ancients* for Piano and Orchestra (World Premiere)

HAYDN *Sinfonia concertante*

TCHAIKOVSKY *Francesca da Rimini*

NJSO ACCENTS:**Classical Conversation—Sat, Mar 10 at 7 pm and Sun, Mar 11 at 2 pm**

Enjoy a lively Classical Conversation before the performance. Learn more about the music from NJSO musicians, guest artists and other engaging insiders.

Talkback—Fri, Mar 9, after the concert

NJSO Behind the Scenes: don't miss a panel of NJSO musicians describe the often grueling, but genuinely fascinating audition process.

Sunday Afternoon Out—Sun, Mar 11, after the concert

Spend an afternoon with LGBTQ friends and enjoy the NJSO's concert, followed by a reception for members of the LGBTQ community. More info at www.njsymphony.org/lgbtq.

NJSO Food Drive

Non-perishable food items will be accepted for donation to local food banks. More info at www.njsymphony.org/fooddrive.

Full concert information is available at www.njsymphony.org/events/detail/brahms-first-symphony.

The March 11 performance is generously sponsored by Bank of America.

THE ARTISTS**Xian Zhang, conductor**

In an acclaimed first season as Music Director of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, Xian Zhang “clearly made her mark,” NJ Advance Media writes. “Now it’s time to see how high [the Orchestra] can soar.” Zhang continues her tenure in 2017–18 with performances of Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique*, Mahler’s First Symphony and Dvořák’s Ninth Symphony, among others.

In September 2016, Zhang assumed the position of Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC National Orchestra & Chorus of Wales, becoming the first female conductor to hold a titled role with a BBC orchestra; the season culminated in a televised BBC Proms performance of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, anticipating the start of a two-year project devoted to the composer’s complete symphonies. Her 2017–18 BBC NOW season includes a concert tour of Wales. Zhang is also Conductor Emeritus of Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano Giuseppe Verdi, following completion of her tenure as Music Director from 2009–16.

Forthcoming engagements include returns to the Los Angeles Philharmonic, NDR Radiophilharmonie, Orchestre National de Belgique, Orquesta Nacional de España and Savonlinna Opera Festival, as well as debuts with the San Francisco Symphony and NAC Orchestra, Ottawa. Zhang is a regular conductor of the London Symphony and Royal Concertgebouw orchestras; recent highlights include her debut with The Cleveland Orchestra and a gala concert with Renée Fleming and the China NCPA Orchestra.

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 serving 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, then became its Associate Conductor and first holder of the Arturo Toscanini Chair.

Sara Daneshpour, piano

Sara Daneshpour is the third prizewinner of the 2017 Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Competition, as well as prizewinner at the 2014 Seoul International Music Competition and 2013 Laureate of the ProLiance Energy Classical Fellowship Awards of the American Pianists Association.

Daneshpour has performed not only in her native city of Washington, DC, but also throughout the US, Russia, Canada, Europe, Israel and Japan. Past highlights include performances of Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 1 with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra and Gerard Schwarz, Saint-Saëns' Piano Concerto No. 2 with the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra and George Hanson, as well as with Peter Bay at the Britt Festival in Jacksonville, Oregon, and the Israel Camerata and Israel Philharmonic in Tel Aviv.

She has studied under Leon Fleisher at the Curtis Institute of Music, Dr. Yoheved Kaplinsky at The Juilliard School and Dr. Oleg Volkov. Since 2015, she has studied with Sergei Babayan at the Cleveland Institute of Music.

Eric Wyrick, violin

Violinist Eric Wyrick is Concertmaster of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and has been an Orpheus Chamber Orchestra member and frequent leader since 1988. Born in New York City, Wyrick attended the Juilliard Pre-College Division and later The Juilliard School, studying with Dorothy DeLay. He has been concertmaster of the American Symphony, Eos and Opéra Français de New York.

Wyrick has appeared as a soloist with the Danish Radio Orchestra, Orchestre de Toulouse, Hudson Valley Philharmonic and San Angelo Symphony Orchestra. In annual NJSO appearances, he has performed concertos of Ferruccio Busoni, Darryl Kubian, Edward T. Cone and Prokofiev, among others. In addition, Wyrick has made solo television appearances including "Dance in America" and the BBC's "Great Composers" series.

An active chamber musician, Wyrick is a founding performer at the Bard Music Festival. He has recorded for Bridge Records, Vanguard and, with Orpheus, Deutsche Grammophon. He is the soloist on a recording of Kubian's 3-2-1 Concerto for Acoustic and Electric Violin with the Orquesta Sinfonica of Michoacan.

Jonathan Spitz, cello

Jonathan Spitz has established himself as one of the leading cellists in the United States with his performances as a soloist, chamber musician and orchestral principal. He has served as Principal Cello of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra since 1991, tours internationally as co-principal of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and serves as solo cellist of the American Ballet Theater Orchestra.

Spitz has performed as a soloist with the NJSO on numerous occasions, including performances of the cello concertos of Schumann, Dvořák and Haydn; Tchaikovsky's *Rococo Variations*; Brahms' Double Concerto and Beethoven's Triple Concerto.

He is in great demand as a teacher and was recently appointed head of strings at Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University, where he has long served on the cello faculty. Each summer, Spitz serves on the artist faculty of the Brevard Music Center in North Carolina.

Robert Ingliss, oboe

New Jersey Symphony Orchestra Principal Oboe Robert Ingliss is also principal oboe of the Santa Fe Opera. He tours worldwide with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, with whom he has appeared as soloist. He also has served as principal oboe with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and Mexico City Philharmonic. He is a member of An die Musik and has appeared at the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Monadnock Music Festival and Adam Chamber Music Festival in New Zealand.

An avid proponent of contemporary music, he has premiered works by Babbitt, Carter, Dalbavie and others as a member of the Aspen Wind Quintet, Cygnus Ensemble, Ensemble 21, Ensemble Sospeso and Manhattan Sinfonietta. His recording credits include avant-garde, Broadway and soundtracks for film and television.

Ingliss has taught at Brooklyn College Conservatory, Columbia University, Sarah Lawrence College and SUNY Purchase. He is a graduate of The Juilliard School, where he studied with Robert Bloom.

Robert Wagner, bassoon

New Jersey Symphony Orchestra Principal Bassoon Robert Wagner has been a member of the Orchestra since 1979. He has performed as a soloist with the NJSO in bassoon concertos by Mozart, Weber and Vivaldi, as well as the Duo Concertino of Richard Strauss.

He has toured extensively and recorded with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and he has performed as a member of the Boehm Quintette and American Wind Quintet.

Wagner graduated with both his Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from The Juilliard School. He teaches at Princeton University and serves on the boards of the League of American Orchestras and ArtPride New Jersey. He also teaches privately.

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.

Music Director Xian Zhang—a “dynamic podium presence” *The New York Times* has praised for her “technical abilities, musicianship and maturity”—continues her acclaimed leadership of the NJSO. 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 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; NJSO Youth Orchestras family of student ensembles, currently led by José Luis Domínguez; and El Sistema-inspired NJSO CHAMPS (Character, Achievement and Music Project). NJSO musicians annually perform original chamber music programs at community events in a variety of settings statewide through the NJSO Community Partners Program.

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.

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