

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **2020–21 NJSO Colton Fellowship to support early-career Black and Latinx musicians**

**Through this excellence-based program, fellows perform in mainstage concerts, education programs and chamber music performances across the state**

**Orchestra to hold auditions for string player  
to join current Colton Fellow Laura Andrade for 2020–21 season**

NEWARK, NJ—The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra announces the application process for the 2020–21 NJSO Colton Fellowship, an excellence-based program designed to support early-career Black and Latinx musicians in the orchestra field. This initiative continues the NJSO’s commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.

The NJSO Colton Fellows will experience the full breadth of the NJSO musician experience of statewide service to people of all ages—performing in mainstage concerts, education programs and chamber music performances across the state. Fellows will also participate in a series of professional development activities tailored to their individual career goals.

For the 2020–21 season, there is one position available for a violinist, violist or bassist to join the current Colton Fellow, cellist Laura Andrade, who returns for a second season. The application deadline for the 2020–21 NJSO Colton Fellowship is April 19, 2020. The NJSO will hold auditions June 1–3. For fellowship eligibility and application details, visit [njsymphony.org/fellowship](http://njsymphony.org/fellowship).

Music Director Xian Zhang says: “The Colton Fellowship has offered an incredible opportunity to showcase diverse voices on stage in New Jersey. Our first fellow, Laura Andrade, has been a wonderful addition to our cello section, and we are so thrilled to welcome her back next season and to introduce a new fellow to the Orchestra.”

“The Colton Fellowship has been an essential part of my growth as a musician—not only because of the immersive orchestral experience, but also because of the relationships formed with members of the orchestra and the opportunity to explore my role in the section and in the orchestra as a unit,” Andrade says. “I think that a fellowship like this is so important because as a cultural and artistic entity, it is our duty to set an example of inclusivity and kindness to the world. That’s why it is so important in our modern day society to have our orchestras represent the people we see in our everyday world, because ultimately that is how we can keep tradition alive.”

NJSO Assistant Concertmaster and Colton Fellowship Task Force Chair Adriana Rosin says: “It is very gratifying to be part of the process that ultimately enables a young musician to develop into a successful professional artist. Through the NJSO Colton Fellowship, this mission becomes even more meaningful as we reach out to the least represented in the classical music world.”

The NJSO Colton Fellowship grew out of the Orchestra’s continuing commitment to transforming all aspects of the organization to reflect the diversity of the communities it serves. The fellowship is made possible by a generous gift from Judith and Stewart Colton.

NJSO President & CEO Gabriel van Aalst says: “The Colton Fellowship speaks to the core of the NJSO’s mission and vision—to serve the diverse communities of New Jersey. We are grateful to Judith and Stewart for their support of this

leading fellowship, and we are delighted to welcome a new musician to join Laura Andrade as our 2020–21 Colton Fellows.”

Judith and Stewart Colton say: “This fellowship combines our love for classical music and education with our wish to see increased diversity and community representation on stage. We are thrilled with the program’s initial success with cellist Laura Andrade as the first Colton fellow, and we look forward to the fellowship’s continued development.”

Other initiatives underway include targeted efforts to increase the diversity of the NJSO board, musicians and staff; professional development sessions for NJSO stakeholders; participation in the SphinxConnect 2020 conference to solicit feedback and input from others in the field; NJSO musicians conducting post-audition mentoring for Sphinx Orchestral Partners Audition participants, and serving as a host organization for Sphinx LEAD 2020, which cultivates diversity among executives in arts and culture.

A member of the National Alliance for Audition Support (NAAS), an unprecedented national initiative to increase diversity in American orchestras, the NJSO is also helping to remove financial barriers to the audition process. NAAS is made up of the Sphinx Organization, New World Symphony and the League of American Orchestras.

### **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 Center for the Arts 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 and the NJSO Youth Orchestras family of student ensembles, led by José Luis Domínguez. NJSO musicians annually perform original chamber music programs at community events in a variety of settings statewide through the NJSO Community Partners program.

Tickets are available for purchase by phone at 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476) or at [njsymphony.org](http://njsymphony.org).

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