

New Jersey Symphony Orchestra returns to main stage with opening-weekend performances Oct 8 & 10

- Music Director Xian Zhang leads Beethoven's Seventh Symphony and a pair of new works in return to mainstage concerts after pandemic-related postponements
- Resident Artistic Catalyst Daniel Bernard Roumain solos in his own *Voodoo Violin Concerto*
- Program features world premiere of NJSO co-commission from Michael Abels
- Oct 8 & 10 at NJPAC in Newark
- njsymphony.org

NEWARK, NJ—The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and Music Director Xian Zhang return to mainstage performances with an opening-weekend program featuring Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, Daniel Bernard Roumain's *Voodoo Violin Concerto* and the world premiere of Michael Abels' *Emerge*, October 8 and 10 at NJPAC in Newark.

Performances take place October 8 at 8 pm and October 10 at 3 pm. Tickets are available online at njsymphony.org or by phone at 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476).

Zhang says: "Live concerts create such a powerful connection between the musicians and the audience that the Orchestra and I cherish, and we cannot wait to perform for our patrons in the concert hall again. This season and this opening program speak to our time, as we celebrate important voices of today alongside wonderful composers of the past. Last year, our first concert film featured works by Daniel Bernard Roumain and Michael Abels that spoke very powerfully to both the Orchestra and our audiences, and I am thrilled to open this season with works by both of them alongside Beethoven's beloved Seventh Symphony. I am particularly excited to welcome Daniel, our Resident Artistic Catalyst, to the stage for his violin concerto."

Roumain takes center stage, performing the violin solo in his *Voodoo Violin Concerto* in his first mainstage performance with the Orchestra since being named NJSO Resident Artistic Catalyst this spring.

Roumain says: "At a time when Haiti is recovering from a devastating hurricane, the ongoing effects of COVID and the wanton assassination of its president, this concerto seeks to remind us all of the magic and majesty of Ayiti, an island nation rooted in the fight for freedom and democracy that inspires my work as a composer, violinist and artist in collaboration and communion with the same people, places and songs of hope found in our beloved New Jersey community. How far is Haiti from New Jersey? The waters and wonder meet upon the same shores of liberty!"

The season opener begins with the world premiere of *Emerge*, a new work the NJSO co-commissioned from Michael Abels after performing the celebrated composer's riveting *Dances & Delights* in the Orchestra's first concert film in November 2020. Beethoven's beloved Seventh Symphony closes the program.

NJSO President & CEO Gabriel van Aalst says: "All of us at the NJSO have greatly missed being together with our full Orchestra family of patrons and community members across the state. The emotion and energy that musicians and audiences alike felt at our recent outdoor parks concerts was overwhelming, and we are so excited to reunite with our audiences in the concert hall. The entire institution has committed all of our efforts to ensuring a safe return to our stages and communities. I am so grateful to all of our donors and patrons for the support that has enabled the NJSO to weather the challenges of the past 18 months and to return to live performances."

NJSO performances will follow safety measures in partnership with the venue and based on the guidance provided by the CDC and the State of New Jersey.

For more information, visit njsymphony.org/openingweekend.

Concert Program

New Jersey Symphony Returns

Friday, October 8, at 8 pm | NJPAC in Newark

Sunday, October 10, at 3 pm | NJPAC in Newark

XIAN ZHANG conductor

DANIEL BERNARD ROUMAIN violin

MICHAEL ABELS *Emerge* (World Premiere, NJSO Co-Commission)

DANIEL BERNARD ROUMAIN *Voodoo Violin Concerto*

BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 7

Learn more at njsymphony.org/openingweekend.

Bank of America is proud to sponsor the NJSO Resident Artistic Catalyst.

New Jersey Symphony Orchestra

The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra connects with the people and diverse communities of New Jersey through the power of live symphonic music to inspire, entertain and educate. Internationally renowned Music Director Xian Zhang has garnered critical acclaim on the podium and has deepened the NJSO's commitment to presenting diverse voices that reflect the communities the Orchestra serves.

The NJSO embraces its legacy as a statewide orchestra through mainstage and chamber performances at venues across New Jersey, as well as partnerships with fellow Garden State arts organizations, universities and civic organizations. The Orchestra's education and community engagement programs promote meaningful, lifelong engagement with live music.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the NJSO has made virtual performances and educational online programs available for free, reaching more than 10 million people across the Orchestra's digital channels. NJSO Concert Films pair world-class NJSO performances with stunning imagery of the people and cityscapes of New Jersey. The NJSO has presented innovative programs with fellow arts organizations, community ensembles and statewide partners. Musicians perform solo and chamber works from iconic New Jersey locations in NJSO Everywhere. NJSO at Home spotlights intimate at-home performances, instrument demonstrations, educational videos and hours of concert recordings.

The NJSO Youth Orchestras have not only continued virtual instruction but have introduced an entirely new dimension to the program. In 2020–21, nearly students collaborated on a yearlong creative composition project—a uniquely engaging opportunity for students to explore their own musical voices and shape new works drawing from all the genres that inspire them. The project culminated in *Our Voices*, an album of 25 original compositions.

The safety of our patrons, musicians and staff is of the utmost importance to the NJSO. Please visit njsymphony.org for constantly updated details focused on attendees' well-being at our performances.

The Orchestra's online hub for free musical content is njsymphony.org/virtual.

Connect with Us:

Website: njsymphony.org

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram: @NJSymphony

YouTube: [@NewJerseySymphony](https://www.youtube.com/@NewJerseySymphony)

Email: information@njsymphony.org

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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