

# NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY

**XIAN ZHANG** MUSIC DIRECTOR

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

## **Xian Zhang conducts the New Jersey Symphony for Mahler's Symphony No. 3**

- Kelley O'Connor mezzo-soprano soloist
- Zhang conducts one of Mahler's most expansive works
- March 3 and 5 in Newark
- [njsymphony.org](http://njsymphony.org)

NEWARK, NJ—Music Director Xian Zhang leads the New Jersey Symphony in her favorite piece of music, Mahler's Symphony No. 3, on March 3 and 5 with mezzo-soprano Kelley O'Connor, Montclair State University Prima Voce, and Starry Arts Group Children's Chorus. Gustav Mahler (1860-1911) was an Austro-Bohemian composer and conductor of the late-Romantic era. His compositions often draw on his Jewish heritage, and he is known for symphonic works of great scale and power. He is routinely described by modern scholars as one of the most important and innovative composers of the Romantic period. Mahler's Third Symphony is his longest and most expansive symphony, with a total performance duration of around 100 minutes. It is also noted for its use of both a solo mezzo-soprano and a chorus of women and children, which was fairly unusual for symphonies of this period. Symphony No. 3 is often considered to be one of the peaks of Mahler's output and is among his most highly regarded works.

Performances take place at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark on Friday, March 3 at 8 pm and Sunday, March 5 at 3 pm. Tickets are available online at [njsymphony.org](http://njsymphony.org) or by phone at 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476).

Grammy Award-winner Kelley O'Connor is an acclaimed American mezzo-soprano. She is known for her powerful and expressive voice, as well as her compelling stage presence. She has performed a multitude of roles in opera, including the Duchess of the King's Company in Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda* and Adalgisa in Bellini's *Norma*. Additionally, she has been praised for her performances of music from the 20th and 21st century. Kelley O'Connor continues to delight audiences with her captivating singing and enthralling stage presence.

Montclair State University Prima Voce, led by director Heather J Buchanan, is an award-winning, student-run a cappella group that has been making music since 2006. The group sings a wide range of genres from classic rock to barbershop and gospel. They are known for their exciting performances, high energy, and engaging crowd interactions. Prima Voce performs around the Montclair area, often at campus events and charity shows, and have also traveled to other parts of the country for competitions and showcases.

The Starry Arts Group of Eastern Cultural Exchange Association (ECEA) has provided an opportunity for children in New Jersey to show their artistic talent. The Starry Arts Group has performed at Huaxia Chinese School's Christmas Gala, Chinese Culture Night and Mid-Autumn Festival every year. A special

children's choir from Starry Arts Group has performed as part of the New Jersey Symphony's Chinese and Lunar New Year Celebrations since 2019.

More information is available at <https://www.njsymphony.org/events/detail/mahlers-symphony-no-3>

### **Mahler's Symphony No. 3**

Friday, March 3, 8 pm | New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark

Sunday, March 5, 3 pm | New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark

**Xian Zhang** conductor

**Kelley O'Connor** mezzo soprano

**Montclair State University Prima Voce** | Heather J Buchanan, director

**Starry Arts Group Children's Chorus** | Rebecca Shen, director

**New Jersey Symphony**

**Gustav Mahler** Symphony No. 3

### **New Jersey Symphony**

The Emmy and Grammy Award-winning New Jersey Symphony, celebrating its Centennial Season in 2022–23, is redefining what it means to be a nationally leading, relevant orchestra in the 21st century. We are renewing our deeply rooted commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion by championing new, and often local, artists; engaging audiences for whom the inspiring depth and breadth of classical music will be new; and incorporating the broadest possible representation in all aspects of our organization—all to better reflect and serve our vibrant communities. Since 2021, Music Director Xian Zhang has worked together with composer, violinist, educator and social-justice advocate Daniel Bernard Roumain, the orchestra's resident artistic catalyst, to offer programming that connects with diverse communities in Newark and throughout New Jersey.

Internationally renowned Chinese-American conductor Xian Zhang began her tenure as the New Jersey Symphony's current Music Director in 2016. Since her arrival at the New Jersey Symphony, Zhang has revitalized programming with an industry-leading commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in mainstage concerts. The centennial season opened in October with concerts featuring Rachmaninoff's Third Piano Concerto with soloist Yefim Bronfman; Jessie Montgomery's *Banner*, Nimbus Dance performing original choreography to Copland's *Appalachian Spring* Suite; Strauss' *Burleske* for Piano and Orchestra with soloist Michelle Cann; Brahms' Fourth Symphony; and Dorothy Chang's *Northern Star*. The centennial season will conclude in June 2023 with Zhang leading the orchestra and violinist Joshua Bell in

Bruch's Violin Concerto No. 1, Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* and a commissioned world premiere by Daniel Bernard Roumain.

For more information about the New Jersey Symphony, visit [www.njsymphony.org](http://www.njsymphony.org) or email [information@njsymphony.org](mailto:information@njsymphony.org). Tickets are available for purchase by phone 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476) or on the Orchestra's website.

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