

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY

XIAN ZHANG MUSIC DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Jersey Symphony to usher in Lunar New Year with January 21 celebration

- January 21: New Jersey Symphony's popular 5th annual Lunar New Year celebration at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark, NJ
- Led by renowned Music Director Xian Zhang and Assistant Conductor Tong Chen
- Featuring a charming dance by the Edison Chinese School Lion Dance Team
- Soloists include violinist Nancy Zhou, pianists Chelsea Guo and Min Kwon with the Peking University Alumni Chorus and Starry Arts Group Children's Chorus
- Concert features the world premiere of a brand-new work for piano and orchestra by composer James Ra, *Fantasia on Sae Taryeong*
- njsymphony.org

NEWARK, NJ— The New Jersey Symphony presents Music Director Xian Zhang igniting the fifth annual Lunar New Year celebration she began five years ago. This festive family-friendly evening of cultural exchange will celebrate the Year of the Rabbit.

The performance takes place on January 21 at 7:30 pm at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark.

Tickets are available online at njsymphony.org or by phone at 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476).

This evening is one of Music Director Xian Zhang's most inspired projects. Born in Dandong, China in 1973, Zhang trained at Beijing's Central Conservatory of Music before coming to the US for her doctorate in conducting at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Shortly after becoming music director of the New Jersey Symphony in 2016, Zhang launched this popular celebration to share cultural traditions from across the globe. Zhang will be ringing in the New Year alongside conductor Tong Chen. Chen, born in Shanghai, China, is in her second season as the New Jersey Symphony's assistant conductor; she is also music director of the Yonkers Philharmonic Orchestra.

Featured in this year's event will be pianist Chelsea Guo and violinist Nancy Zhou, two rising stars who recently received glowing reviews for their performances in the New Jersey Symphony's "East/West: A Symphonic Celebration" concert at New York City's Alice Tully Hall, featuring music by Qigang Chen and Jiping Zhao, composers also represented on this program.

The Symphony is proud to announce that this performance will feature the world premiere of James Ra's *Fantasia on Sae Taryeong* performed by Min Kwon. Kwon is an Korean-American pianist and professor of piano at Rutgers University's Mason Gross School of the Arts.

The evening will include performances from the Peking University Alumni Chorus, Starry Arts Group Children's Chorus, and the Edison Chinese School Lion Dance Team.

Prior to the performance, the Symphony is hosting a Gala fundraiser, beginning at 4:30 pm. Gala guests will enjoy a pre-concert reception and festivities with featured artists followed by an elegant gala dinner. For information on Lunar New Year events available at njsymphony.org/lnygala

All New Jersey Symphony performances follow safety measures in partnership with the venues and based on the guidance provided by the CDC and the State of New Jersey.

More information is available at njsymphony.org/lny

2023 Lunar New Year Celebration

Saturday, January 21, 7:30 pm | New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark

Xian Zhang conductor

Tong Chen conductor

Nancy Zhou violin

Chelsea Guo piano

Min Kwon piano

Peking University Alumni Chorus

Starry Arts Group Children's Chorus Rebecca Shen, Director

Edison Chinese School Lion Dance Team

New Jersey Symphony

Li Huanzhi *Spring Festival Overture*

Zhao Jiping Violin Concerto No. 1

James Ra *Sae Taryung* for Piano and Orchestra

Chen Qigang *Er Huang*

Bizet "Choeur des gamins" from *Carmen*

Traditional (arr. Liu) *Di Li, Di Li*

Li Shutong (arr. Hersh) *Farewell at Long Pavilion*

Sartori (arr. Hersh) *Con te partirò*

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 or email information@njsymphony.org. Tickets are available for purchase by phone 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476) or on the Orchestra's website.

Press Contacts

New Jersey Symphony / Local Press

Sarah Hornblower, New Jersey Symphony, Interim Director of Marketing & Communications
973.735.1715 | shornblower@njsymphony.org

Geoffrey Anderson, New Jersey Symphony, Vice President of Marketing & External Affairs
973.735.1713 | ganderson@njsymphony.org

Kirshbaum Associates / National & Classical Music Press

Beverly Greenfield, Kirshbaum Associates, Director of Public Relations
bgreenfield@kirshbaumassociates.com

Shirley Kirshbaum, Kirshbaum Associates, President
917.331.1888 | skirshbaum@kirshbaumassociates.com

Connect with Us:

njsymphony.org

@NJSymphony on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [TikTok](#)

@NewJerseySymphony on [YouTube](#)

Email: information@njsymphony.org