

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY

XIAN ZHANG MUSIC DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Jersey Symphony Appoints Diego García as Youth Orchestra Artistic Director

- Diego García named new Artistic Director of New Jersey Symphony Youth Orchestra
- njsymphony.org/youthorchestra

NEWARK, NJ – The New Jersey Symphony is thrilled to announce the appointment of Diego García as the new Artistic Director of the Symphony's Youth Orchestra beginning July 1, 2023. With a reputation for advocacy for music education and dedication to cultivating young talent, García is set to lead the New Jersey Symphony Youth Orchestra into an exciting new era of artistry, engagement and expansion.

Diego García will be succeeding José Luis Domínguez as Artistic Director of the New Jersey Symphony Youth Orchestra. Domínguez, who has made significant contributions to the youth orchestra's growth and artistic achievements during his tenure, will maintain an advisory role to ensure a seamless leadership transition.

"It has been a privilege to serve as the Artistic Director of the New Jersey Symphony Youth Orchestra. Witnessing the growth and artistic development of these talented young musicians has been truly inspiring. As I pass the baton to Diego García, I am confident in his abilities to lead the orchestra into a new era of artistry and engagement. I will remain committed in my advisory role, ensuring a smooth transition to Diego's leadership. I am proud of what we have accomplished together, and I am excited to see the program continue to flourish."

Diego García's dedication to music education and his ability to bring out the best in young musicians have been widely recognized throughout his career. He has conducted and performed in major venues including Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center, The Kennedy Center and The Metropolitan Museum of Art. As an accomplished conductor and educator, García has demonstrated a unique ability to foster a supportive and inspiring environment for young musicians to develop their talents to the fullest.

"We are delighted to welcome Diego García as the new Artistic Director of the New Jersey Symphony Youth Orchestra," said Gabriel van Aalst, President & CEO at the Symphony. "Diego's exceptional talent, extensive experience, and commitment to nurturing young musicians make him the ideal choice to lead our Youth Orchestra. We look forward to the exciting new artistic directions and initiatives that he will inspire."

Established in 1990 with a mission of diversity, equity and inclusion, the New Jersey Symphony Youth Orchestra is a nationally recognized program that provides exceptional orchestral training and performance opportunities to young musicians across the state—especially Black and Latino players from the Greater Newark area. Comprised of students ranging from grades 4–12, the Youth Orchestra aims to nurture their artistic growth and foster a lifelong love of symphonic music. With Diego García at the helm, the program is poised to take bold strides toward an even brighter future.

"I am deeply honored to join the New Jersey Symphony Youth Orchestra as its Artistic Director," said Diego García. "The Symphony's Youth Orchestra has a long-standing tradition of nurturing creativity and championing access for young musicians of all walks of life, and I am excited to build upon its strong foundation. Together with the talented young musicians, dedicated staff, and supportive community, we will create transformative musical experiences and shape the next generation of artists and leaders."

For more information about the New Jersey Symphony Youth Orchestra, please visit njsymphony.org/youthorchestra

A major gift made by longtime supporter, the late Anna P. Drago, recognized the significance of this position at the New Jersey Symphony. The position is named the Anna P. Drago Chair in her honor.

Diego García

Hailing from Colombia, Diego García is a globally sought-after conductor, cellist, and educator who works with the most respected conservatories and universities such as The Juilliard School, Mannes School of Music and Eastman School of Music. García is thrilled to be starting a new position this fall as Cello Faculty and Guest Conductor at the NYU Steinhardt School of Music. García's approach to music-making is full of dynamic passion, humor, and a strong sense of collaboration. As a conductor, he has shared the stage with prominent artists such as Joshua Bell, Sharon Isbin, Anthony McGill, Philippe Quint, Julian Schwartz, Steven Masi and Naomi O'Connell. He has conducted and performed in major venues including Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, The Kennedy Center, The Metropolitan Museum and Vienna's Rathauseplatz Concert Series. García has made appearances with contemporary artists such as Bruce Springsteen, Elton John, Harry Connick Jr and Jennifer Lopez. His first album as cellist and arranger was praised by *All About Jazz*: "... García perform[s] intricate counterpoint that enhances the overall beauty of the whole without being obtrusive, also playing arresting lead parts."

A strong advocate for the transformative powers of music, García strives to help students tap into their creative potential as young artists and professionals. García is Music Director of Orchestras at the Dwight-Englewood School and the Thurnauer School of Music. He was most recently Lead String Director for Summer Performing Arts with Juilliard in Geneva, Switzerland. From 2019-2022, García was on the conducting faculty of the Mannes School of Music Pre-College Division. He previously held the position of Music Director of the Eastman Youth Chamber Soloists. García is a frequent guest conductor at different festivals and workshops in the United States, South America, and Europe, including Parnu Symphony Orchestra (Estonia), Flanders Music Festival (Belgium), Hampton Roads Chamber Players and Bard College Philharmonic Orchestra. García has also served as Music Director of the Finger Lakes Symphony Orchestra (New York) for several seasons, where he organized ongoing collaborations with the Ithaca Ballet.

An avid chamber musician, García was a founding member of a new music ensemble called "Gibbs & Main," a group that regularly commissioned works from new composers and presented interactive children's concerts in formal and community venues. García's performances as soloist and chamber musician have been featured on NPR's "Live from Hochstein", WXXI-FM 91.5's Backstage Pass, as well as broadcasts for Music for Montauk, the Eastman School of Music's Washington Square Concert Series, and at the Spotlight Series, Keuka on the Lake.

The New Jersey Symphony Youth Orchestra

The New Jersey Symphony Youth Orchestra gives students in grades 4-12 – especially Black and Latino youth in the Greater Newark area—unparalleled opportunities to achieve personal and musical excellence. Weekly coaching by Symphony musicians and a supportive peer-to-peer environment provides quality learning and performing experiences and builds a unique culture of collaboration. The achievements of this program and its impact on the lives of these young musicians have received national recognition from the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities.

Youth Orchestra brings together students of all skill levels who share a passion for music. There are four performing ensembles that are sequential in level, creating a pathway for students to flourish and grow under the guidance of the Symphony's expert faculty. Students in Academy Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra, String Ensemble and Training Ensemble perform two full concerts each year and participate in masterclasses and workshops with renowned guest artists. In addition to great music making, benefits of the program include individualized instruction and musicianship

training, volunteer opportunities, additional performance opportunities for advanced students and complimentary tickets to select Symphony concerts.

Youth Orchestra annually serves more than 200 students from 11 counties across northern and central New Jersey. Students who play orchestral instruments can apply for membership in the New Jersey Symphony Youth Orchestra.

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.

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