

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY

XIAN ZHANG MUSIC DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Indie icon Ben Folds joins New Jersey Symphony for two performances of greatest hits

NEWARK, NJ—Emmy-nominated singer-songwriter-composer Ben Folds joins New Jersey Symphony for two unique and unforgettable performances of music from across his career.

Performances take place on Saturday, June 13, at 7:30 pm at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) in Newark and Sunday June 14, at 2 pm at the State Theatre New Jersey in New Brunswick. The Saturday performance includes a free Instrument Discovery Zone with New Jersey Symphony musicians at 6:30 pm in NJPAC's lobby for patrons to explore making music with various instruments. Come try out an instrument for yourself before the performance! After the Sunday, June 14 performance, the New Jersey Symphony Next Gen program will host a happy hour event in New Brunswick at 4 pm, location to be determined. The Next Gen program is a membership program for young music enthusiasts between the ages of 21 and 40 to network with other passionate music lovers from across the state. For the latest details and more information, visit njsymphony.org/nextgen.

Tickets available at njsymphony.org.

EVENT DETAILS AND ARTIST BIOS

Ben Folds with New Jersey Symphony

Ben Folds piano & vocals

Edwin Outwater conductor

New Jersey Symphony

Newark → Saturday, June 13, 7:30 pm

New Brunswick → Sunday, June 14, 2 pm

[Event page](#)

Ben Folds

Ben Folds is an Emmy-nominated singer-songwriter who has created an enormous body of genre-bending music that includes pop albums with Ben Folds Five, multiple solo albums, a holiday album, and numerous collaborative records.

He currently tours as a pop artist, while also performing for over two decades with some of the world's greatest symphony orchestras.

Folds, who served for eight years as the first ever Artistic Advisor to the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, stepped down from his post when Donald Trump announced his takeover of the Center. Just days before the US presidential election, Folds recorded two sold out performances with the NSO which he released as a live album in 2025 that debuted at the top of the Billboard classical and classical crossover charts. A *New York Times* Best Selling author, Ben also creates new music for film, TV, and theatre, including original songs for an ongoing series of animated Peanuts specials on Apple TV.

In 2022, he launched a music education charitable initiative in his native state of North Carolina entitled "Keys for Kids," which provides funds and keyboards to existing nonprofits that offer free or affordable piano lessons to school-age children from historically marginalized communities. For the past 15 years he has been an outspoken advocate for arts funding, music education, and music therapy in the US as a member of Americans for the Arts and the Arts Action Fund.

Edwin Outwater

Edwin Outwater is redefining the concert experience as a groundbreaking conductor, curator, and producer, known for his dynamic approach and genre-blending collaborations. Working with a wide range of artists from Metallica to Wynton Marsalis, Renée Fleming, and Yo-Yo Ma, Outwater's creative vision and ability to seamlessly navigate between musical worlds has made him one of the most sought-after conductors, with the legendary Michael Tilson Thomas aptly describing him as "one of the most innovative conductors on the scene today."

Outwater currently serves as Music Director of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he leads their ensembles and oversees the institution's bold artistic initiatives. He is also Principal Guest Conductor and Curator of the BBC Concert Orchestra, delivering an exciting range of concerts over three seasons with yearly appearances at the BBC Proms; and is Music Director Laureate of the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, recognizing his decade-long tenure.

Outwater has conducted major orchestras including the New York Philharmonic, The Cleveland Orchestra, Chicago Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Royal

Philharmonic, where he headlined a multi-concert series at the grand opening of Steinmetz Hall in Florida, and San Francisco Symphony, with whom he has a long-standing relationship. His work often blends classical music with pop culture, producing original shows with drag icon Peaches Christ, with his collaborations also extending to the symphonic shows of stars such as Diana Ross, Beck, Trey Anastasio, Leslie Odom Jr., Cynthia Erivo, and Lang Lang.

New Jersey Symphony

New Jersey Symphony is a GRAMMY and Emmy Award-winning orchestra. Under the direction of Music Director Xian Zhang, the Symphony performs more than 55 mainstage concerts across the state at venues in Newark, Princeton, New Brunswick, Red Bank, and Morristown, as well as at schools and public spaces statewide. Programming at the Symphony reflects an unwavering commitment to diverse communities throughout the state, while providing students unparalleled opportunities to achieve musical excellence through its Youth Orchestra and other education programs. In 2024, the Symphony announced it would continue to deliver its statewide activities from a new, permanent office, rehearsal, and concert space in Jersey City, set to open in 2027. For more information about New Jersey Symphony, visit our website at njsymphony.org or our [newsroom](#) for press releases and photos.

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The June 14 performance is presented in collaboration with State Theatre New Jersey.