

New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and Northern New Jersey Musicians Guild announce five-year musicians contract agreement

NEWARK, NJ—The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra Board of Trustees and Northern New Jersey Musicians Guild, Local 16-248 of the American Federation of Musicians, have ratified a five-year contract agreement. The agreement between the NJSO and the musicians union is retroactive to September 1, 2017, and runs through August 31, 2022.

NJSO President & CEO Gabriel van Aalst says: “This is a fantastic moment for the NJSO family, as the new five-year contract is an important signifier of our united desire to ensure the future of the organization. I’d like to take this moment to thank the Orchestra Committee and the musicians of the NJSO for their collaborative approach to this process and their incredible commitment to the future of the Symphony. With this new contract, the NJSO will be able to make bold plans, both artistically and organizationally, as we approach our 100th anniversary in 2022 and continue to serve the diverse communities of New Jersey.”

Orchestra Committee Chair and Assistant Concertmaster Adriana Rosin says: “This agreement helps stabilize the Symphony’s next few years, allowing for an even more vibrant presence in New Jersey and aiming for growth as we approach the NJSO Centennial. We look forward to continuing our mission of artistic excellence under the leadership of our Music Director, Xian Zhang. The Orchestra Committee thanks everyone on all sides for their patience during the negotiation process and gratefully acknowledges AFM Negotiator Todd Jelen and Local 16-248 President Anthony Scally for their guidance and expertise throughout.”

Under the five-year contract, musician base pay will remain flat for the first two years of the agreement, followed by a 2 percent base wage increase in the third year, 3 percent base wage increase in the fourth year and 5 percent base wage increase in the fifth year.

Underscoring a mutual commitment to providing performances of the highest artistic quality and connecting musicians with communities, the contract also increases scheduling flexibility and defines rehearsal time for education and community engagement services, including performances through the NJSO Community Partners program.

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Named “a vital, artistically significant musical organization” by *The Wall Street Journal*, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra embodies that vitality through its statewide presence and critically acclaimed performances, education partnerships and unparalleled access to music and the Orchestra’s superb musicians.

Music Director Xian Zhang—a “dynamic podium presence” *The New York Times* has praised for her “technical abilities, musicianship and maturity”—continues her acclaimed leadership of the NJSO. The Orchestra presents classical, pops and family programs, as well as outdoor summer concerts and special events. Embracing its legacy as a statewide orchestra, the NJSO is the resident orchestra of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark and regularly performs at State Theatre New Jersey in New Brunswick, Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank, Richardson Auditorium in Princeton, Mayo Performing Arts Center in Morristown and bergenPAC in Englewood. Partnerships with New Jersey arts organizations, universities and civic organizations remain a key element of the Orchestra’s statewide identity.

In addition to its lauded artistic programming, the NJSO presents a suite of education and community engagement programs that promote meaningful, lifelong engagement with live music. Programs include school-time Concerts for

Young People; NJSO Youth Orchestras family of student ensembles, currently led by José Luis Domínguez; and El Sistema-inspired NJSO CHAMPS (Character, Achievement and Music Project). NJSO musicians annually perform original chamber music programs at community events in a variety of settings statewide through the NJSO Community Partners Program.

For more information about the NJSO, 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.

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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