

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## Music Director Jacques Lacombe to end tenure with New Jersey Symphony Orchestra after 2015–16 season



### Lacombe to lead NJSO for two more exciting seasons

NEWARK, NJ (October 8, 2014)—New Jersey Symphony Orchestra Music Director Jacques Lacombe has announced that, upon the completion of his current contract with the Orchestra, he will step down as the NJSO’s music director in August 2016. Lacombe will continue to lead the NJSO through the completion of the 2015–16 season, which he is currently planning.

Lacombe says: “It has been a real pleasure to serve as music director of the NJSO and to have had a relationship with this remarkable Orchestra since my debut here in 2008. In recent years, my international engagements conducting operas and making guest appearances with orchestras in Europe and in North America have demanded more and more of my time, making it increasingly difficult to reconcile this with my commitment to the NJSO. So, it is with a heavy heart that I tell you that I have decided to step down as music director of the Orchestra following the end of my current contract in August 2016.

“I’m extremely proud of the work that I have accomplished with the NJSO and the creative initiatives that we’ve put in place: the New Jersey Roots Project, celebrating the wealth of composers who have lived and worked in this great state; an interesting array of world and US premieres including new works by composers such as Robert Aldridge, Geri Allen, Richard Danielpour, Tan Dun, Lowell Liebermann and Andre Prévin; the NJSO Edward T. Cone Institute in Princeton, offering a unique training program to support and perform works by young emerging composers, and developing important and original ways of involving other cultural institutions through my programming, including dance, theater, visual arts, choirs and children’s performing groups. In 2012, I got the chance to make my Carnegie Hall debut with the NJSO by bringing the huge Busoni Piano Concerto to the Spring for Music Festival. Our inclusion in that festival was based specifically on the creativeness of the NJSO’s programming, which has also been honored with an ASCAP award from the League of American Orchestras.”

“Most of all,” Lacombe continues, “I’m truly proud of the high level of performances we have achieved and sustained at the NJSO in the last five years. The press has picked up on it with resoundingly favorable reviews, as the audiences certainly have with their warmth and interest. Over the years, with our many performance venues, we have grown something special for the entire community of the Garden State.

“I look forward to two more exciting seasons with the Orchestra. As always, I will continue to dedicate all my energy and passion for music to make each concert a unique and moving experience. Many thanks to all the wonderful people who help me lead this organization: musicians, staff, board members and, above all, our patrons, who have been such incredible supporters of the NJSO and my work with the Orchestra.”

NJSO Board Co-Chairs Ruth Lipper and Stephen Sichak Jr. say: “In his time as NJSO Music Director, Jacques has made an indelible mark on our Orchestra. His celebration of the state’s cultural heritage through the New Jersey Roots Project and partnerships with other cultural organizations have led to some truly inspiring and creative collaborations on stage.

“We are grateful for the ways Jacques has enthusiastically engaged with the audiences and communities we serve, and we are grateful that we will be able to enjoy two more seasons of musical excellence with him and the Orchestra. While we will be sad to see him leave in August 2016, we are proud to see his international career flourish and will certainly cherish each performance over the next two seasons.”

NJSO President & CEO James Roe says: “I have had the unique privilege of working with Jacques both as a member of the Orchestra and as an administrator, and I have seen Jacques chart a bold artistic course for the state’s largest performing arts organization from both sides of the stage. His programming has expanded the concert experience through theatrical and other cross-disciplinary explorations and has brought many new and newly discovered works to the Orchestra’s audiences.

“Jacques has planned many signature thrills for the NJSO’s 2015–16 season, which we are eager to share with our statewide audience. He will leave an unforgettable tenure with the Orchestra.”

Since becoming the NJSO’s Music Director in 2010, Lacombe has garnered praise from critics and audiences for his programming and talents on the podium. This spring, *Inside Jersey* included Lacombe in “The 100+ Club” of the most influential people in New Jersey, writing: “As music director of the NJSO since 2010, Jacques Lacombe has led the orchestra on one fruitful adventure after another. Honored by Carnegie Hall for adventurous programming, he and the orchestra achieved a stunning success at the Spring for Music festival in 2012—their first appearance at the venue in six years. Lacombe has also initiated the New Jersey Roots Project, showcasing composers with local ties, including jazz artist Geri Allen; excelled in challenging and contemporary music and celebrated the classical masterworks.”

Earlier this year, Lacombe was invested into the Order of Canada for his international career and achievements, as well as his work within the country. The centerpiece of Canada’s honors system, the Order of Canada recognizes a lifetime of outstanding achievement, dedication to the community and service to the nation. In 2012, Lacombe received the highest honor Québec’s government can bestow when he was knighted by the National Order of Québec.

The Orchestra’s search for its next music director will begin this season.

### **MUSIC DIRECTOR JACQUES LACOMBE**

A remarkable conductor whose artistic integrity and rapport with orchestras have propelled him to international stature, Jacques Lacombe has been Music Director of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra since 2010 and Orchestre Symphonique de Trois-Rivières since 2006. He was previously Principal Guest Conductor of the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal and Music Director of orchestra and opera with the Philharmonie de Lorraine.

Lacombe has garnered critical praise for his creative programming and bold leadership of the NJSO. *Time Out New York* has named the Orchestra’s acclaimed Winter Festivals “an eagerly anticipated annual event” for the innovative concert experiences that have included a realization of Scriabin’s “color organ,” collaborations with theater and dance troupes

and presentations of Tan Dun concertos in which clay pots and water become solo instruments. *The New York Times* wrote that “It was an honor to be in the hall” for Lacombe and the NJSO’s performance of Busoni’s Piano Concerto at the 2012 Spring for Music Festival at Carnegie Hall.

Recently, Lacombe helmed a pair of unique initiatives through the New Jersey Roots Project: the NJSO launched the inaugural NJSO Edward T. Cone Composition Institute for young composers—a week of intense compositional evaluations and consultations that culminated in a live performance of the participants’ works—and gave the world premiere of Cone’s Symphony in a special lecture-concert. Other 2014–15 NJSO highlights include the “Sounds of Shakespeare” Winter Festival, featuring collaborations with violinist Sarah Chang and the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey.

In July, Lacombe made his Tanglewood Music Festival debut with the Boston Symphony Orchestra; this season, he returns to the Deutsche Oper Berlin for productions of *Carmen*, *The Damnation of Faust* and *Samson and Delilah*; L’Opera de Monte Carlo for Shostakovich’s *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and Vancouver Opera for *Carmen*.

He has appeared with the Cincinnati, Columbus, Québec, Toronto, Vancouver and New Zealand Symphony Orchestras and National Arts Centre Orchestra of Ottawa. He frequently conducts in France, Spain and Australia and has led tours and recordings with the National Youth Orchestra of Canada.

Opera highlights include all-star productions of *La Bohème* and *Tosca* at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden and numerous productions with the Deutsche Oper Berlin and Metropolitan Opera, as well as engagements at opera houses in Marseille, Strasbourg, Turin and Munich. He has recorded for the CPO and Analekta labels; he has recorded Orff’s *Carmina Burana* and Janáček’s Suite from *The Cunning Little Vixen* with the NJSO. His performances have been broadcast on PBS, the CBC, Mezzo TV and Arte TV, among others.

Born in Cap-de-la-Madeleine, Québec, Lacombe attended the Conservatoire de Musique de Montréal and Hochschule für Musik in Vienna. He was named a Chevalier de l’Ordre national du Québec in 2012 and a Member of the Order of Canada—among the highest civilian honors in the country—in 2013. More information is available at [www.jacqueslacombe.com](http://www.jacqueslacombe.com).

### **THE 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.

Under the bold leadership of Music Director Jacques Lacombe, the NJSO 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 the State Theatre 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 the three-ensemble NJSO Youth Orchestras, school-time Concerts for Young People performances and multiple offerings—including the El Sistema-inspired NJSO CHAMPS (Character, Achievement and Music Project)—that provide and promote in-school instrumental instruction as part of the NJSO Academy. The NJSO’s REACH (Resources for Education and Community Harmony) chamber music program annually brings original programs—designed and performed by NJSO musicians—to a variety of settings, reaching as many as 17,000 people in nearly all of New Jersey’s 21 counties.

For more information about the NJSO, 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.

*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. United is the official airline of the NJSO.*

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