

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY

XIAN ZHANG MUSIC DIRECTOR

2023–24 Full Season Listing

Opening Weekend Ellington & Dvořák: New Worlds

New Jersey Symphony Classical

Robert Spano conductor

Aaron Diehl piano

Aaron Diehl Trio

New Jersey Symphony

Newark → Saturday, October 14, 8 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

New Brunswick → Sunday, October 15, 3 pm, State Theatre New Jersey

Valerie Coleman *Umoja*

Coleman starts the season with a whisper, then a gorgeous melody rises evoking the power and sweetness of *umoja*, the Swahili word for unity. The whole orchestra takes it up and you're on the edge of your seat with this joyous, full-throated cry for community.

Still *Out of the Silence*

A wedding present for his bride, Still's *Out of the Silence*, brought out of silence by Aaron Diehl and the New Jersey Symphony, is a gentle and ethereal little hymn written in the depths of the Great Depression. Still's wife said of it: "Only in meditation does one discover beauties remote from the problems of Earth."

Ellington *New World A-Comin'*

Ellington created this lush musical portrait of a "new world where there would be no war, no greed—where love was unconditional." What better way to start the season than with the Aaron Diehl Trio and the genius of jazz, Sir Duke!

Dvořák Symphony No. 9, "From the New World"

A Czech visitor to America, Dvořák sought out and loved the songs of Indigenous and Black people. Blending their inspiration with his imagination, he created one of the most beloved concert works of all time.

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Schumann's Cello Concerto

New Jersey Symphony Classical

Joseph Young conductor

Sterling Elliott cello

New Jersey Symphony

Newark → Thursday, October 19, 1:30 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Princeton → Friday, October 20, 8 pm, Richardson Auditorium

Red Bank → Saturday, October 21, 8 pm, Count Basie Center for the Arts

Newark → Sunday, October 22, 3 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Jessie Montgomery New Work (New Jersey Symphony Co-Commission)

The BBC called Jessie Montgomery “one of the most distinctive and communicative voices in the U.S.,” and the New Jersey Symphony gives the East Coast debut of her new work.

R. Schumann Cello Concerto

Heart-on-sleeve music, one gorgeous melody after another soaring from Sterling Elliott's cello. The New Jersey Symphony backs him up with Schumann's richest Romantic harmonies.

Elgar *Enigma Variations*

Edward Elgar loved to spend his evenings bashing away at his upright piano, chomping on a cigar, making up tunes. This is how he created a kaleidoscopic set of variations on a mysterious melody—all of which made him a household name across the land.

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Jurassic Park in Concert

New Jersey Symphony at the Movies

Red Bank → Friday, October 27, 8 pm, Count Basie Center for the Arts

Newark → Saturday, October 28, 8 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

New Brunswick → Sunday, October 29, 3 pm, State Theatre New Jersey

Constantine Kitsopoulos conductor

New Jersey Symphony

This action-packed adventure pits man against prehistoric predators in the ultimate battle for survival. Featuring visually stunning imagery and groundbreaking special effects, this

epic film is sheer movie magic 65 million years in the making. Now audiences can experience *Jurassic Park* as never before: projected in HD with a full symphony orchestra performing John Williams' iconic score live to picture. Welcome ... to *Jurassic Park*!

October 29 concert presented in collaboration with State Theatre New Jersey.

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Ruth Reinhardt Conducts Bartók & Mendelssohn

New Jersey Symphony Classical

Ruth Reinhardt conductor

Time For Three

Ranaan Meyer double bass | **Nick Kendall** violin | **Charles Yang** violin

New Jersey Symphony

Newark → Thursday, November 9, 1:30 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Newark → Friday, November 10, 8 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Morristown → Sunday, November 12, 3 pm, Mayo Performing Arts Center

Mendelssohn *The Hebrides (Fingal's Cave)*

Breathing deep the bracing Atlantic salt air for the first time, 20-year-old Mendelssohn fell in love with the moody islands off Scotland's west coast. He painted them in music, full of sweeping melodies, quick-shifting swells and dramatic energy.

Kevin Puts *Contact*

Time for Three call themselves "a classically trained garage band" and they wow audiences with limitless virtuosity across every kind of music. They join the New Jersey Symphony for this joyous, Grammy Award-nominated masterpiece by Pulitzer Prize-winner Kevin Puts.

Bartók Concerto for Orchestra

Written on what many thought was his deathbed, Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra gave the composer new life. Every section of the orchestra gets the spotlight to dazzling effect, and the Concerto's last moments are some of the most thrilling in all classical music.

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Joshua Bell Leads the New Jersey Symphony

New Jersey Symphony Classical

Joshua Bell conductor and violin
New Jersey Symphony

Newark → Thursday, November 30, 1:30 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Newark → Friday, December 1, 8 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

New Brunswick → Sunday, December 3, 3 pm, State Theatre New Jersey

Mendelssohn Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

When needing an example of “genius,” look no further than this astounding product of a 17-year-old boy. Here are the lovers, the silliness and the quicksilver humor of Shakespeare’s comedy delivered in a dozen minutes of utter brilliance.

Mendelssohn Violin Concerto

The violin leads the drama from the first bar of Mendelssohn’s masterpiece, but here too are moments of hold-your-breath beauty. These shimmer like moonlight on water when played by Joshua Bell, one of the world’s finest violinists.

Beethoven Symphony No. 4

He could stir up musical storm clouds like a god, but Beethoven also could part them to let the most brilliant sunlight warm the soul. The Fourth is the composer at his sunniest, and Joshua Bell, violin still in hand, leads the New Jersey Symphony from the concertmaster’s seat.

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A Gospel Holiday

New Jersey Symphony Family Concert

Newark → Saturday, December 9, 2 pm & 3:30 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

New Jersey Symphony

Spotlighting celebrated artists from Newark and beyond, the New Jersey Symphony lauds the power of the first instrument—the human voice—with a gospel music-inspired holiday extravaganza. Come ready to sing, dance and clap along! New Jersey Symphony Family Concert: Fun for All Ages is presented in NJPAC's Victoria Theater.

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Handel's *Messiah*

New Jersey Symphony Special Concert

Princeton → Friday, December 15, 8 pm, Richardson Auditorium

Newark → Sunday, December 17, 7 pm, Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart

Nicholas McGegan conductor

Sherezade Panthaki soprano

Key'mon Murrah countertenor

Thomas Cooley tenor

Tyler Duncan baritone

Montclair State University Singers | Heather J. Buchanan, director

New Jersey Symphony

Join us as the Symphony performs this great holiday tradition! Nicholas McGegan will conduct Handel's incomparable classic *Messiah*. Joining McGegan and the musicians will be the talented singers of Montclair State University, who will delight audiences as they sing the glorious "Hallelujah Chorus."

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Beethoven's Violin Concerto with Augustin Hadelich

New Jersey Symphony Classical

Xian Zhang conductor

Augustin Hadelich violin

New Jersey Symphony

Princeton → Friday, January 12, 8 pm, Richardson Auditorium

Red Bank → Saturday, January 13, 8 pm, Count Basie Center for the Arts

Newark → Sunday, January 14, 3 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Daniel Bernard Roumain *i am a white person who __ Black people*

This provocative piece for strings and percussion opens the concert with the feeling of a tender hymn, then it quickens with an edgy energy. Another vital contribution by our Resident Artistic Catalyst.

Beethoven Violin Concerto

When Augustin Hadelich performs, time stands still. It is his own brand of magic, how he

makes a classic like Beethoven's serenely beautiful Violin Concerto sound as if it was written yesterday, just for him.

Mussorgsky/Ravel *Pictures at an Exhibition*

Mussorgsky poured out his feeling at the loss of a brilliant artist-friend in pieces originally meant for piano, and Ravel transferred these to an epic orchestral canvas using every imaginable color. The Newark Museum of Art will curate the artwork projected during the *Pictures at an Exhibition* performances in Red Bank and Newark.

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The American Dream

New Jersey Symphony Classical

Xian Zhang conductor

Rob Kapilow conductor

JCC Young People's Chorus @ Thurnauer

Young People's Chorus of New York City®

New Jersey Symphony

Newark → Saturday, January 20, 8 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Morristown → Sunday, January 21, 3 pm, Mayo Performing Arts Center

Still *Darker America*

Still wrote this in the 1920s to depict the struggles of his fellow African Americans, ultimately aiming to show "the triumph of a people over their sorrows through fervent prayer." Tenderness and toughness mark this moving testament to resilience.

Rob Kapilow *We Came to America* (World Premiere, Commissioned by the Thurnauer School of Music at the Kaplen JCC on the Palisades)

In this nation of immigrants, we all have our stories. Inspired by in-depth source research, interviews with generations of immigrants, and melodies from many countries, composer Rob Kapilow has crafted an instant classic of compelling music for chorus and orchestra.

Bernstein Three Dances Episodes from *On the Town*

The musical that gave the world "New York, New York," *On the Town* was a hit from its wartime premiere. The story of three sailors on leave in Manhattan is filled with Bernstein's signature restless energy, and made huge waves of its own in the 1940s with a racially diverse cast.

Bernstein Symphonic Dances from *West Side Story*

The tragedy of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* set on Manhattan's fire escapes and

sidewalks. These Symphonic Dances from *West Side Story* are a fountain of songs you love, from “Tonight” to “Maria” and the manic shout of “Mambo!”

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Lunar New Year Celebration

New Jersey Symphony Special Concert

Newark → Saturday, February 3, 7:30 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Yue Bao conductor

Tony Siqi Yun piano

New Jersey Symphony

Join us for this evening of community and cultural exchange that is wonderful for families and children as we celebrate the Year of the Dragon. Music Director Xian Zhang ignited the first Lunar New Year Celebration six years ago, and this festive tradition continues with conductor Yue Bao and pianist Tony Siqi Yun.

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Respect: A Tribute to Aretha Franklin

New Jersey Symphony Special Concert

Red Bank → Friday, February 16, 8 pm, Count Basie Center for the Arts

Newark → Saturday, February 17, 8 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

New Brunswick → Sunday, February 18, 3 pm, State Theatre New Jersey

Capathia Jenkins vocalist

Ryan Shaw vocalist

New Jersey Symphony

A tribute to the Queen of Soul, this program features symphony favorite Capathia Jenkins and three-time Grammy Award-nominee Ryan Shaw performing such iconic hits as “Respect,” “Think,” “A Natural Woman,” “Chain of Fools,” “Amazing Grace,” and many others.

February 18 concert presented in collaboration with State Theatre New Jersey.

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Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* **New Jersey Symphony Classical**

Xian Zhang conductor

Robert Ingliss oboe

Eric Wyrick violin

New Jersey Symphony

Newark → Thursday, February 22, 1:30 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Red Bank → Saturday, February 24, 8 pm, Count Basie Center for the Arts

New Brunswick → Sunday, February 25, 3 pm, State Theatre New Jersey

Reena Esmail *RE/Member*

Reena Esmail's wildly colorful overture *RE/Member* came to life during the pandemic. What a joy, as it celebrates the regathering of musicians and has a fun bit of stage wizardry for oboe.

R. Strauss Oboe Concerto

In the days right after World War II, with his beloved German homeland in rubble, many thought Richard Strauss' composing pen had dried up. What a surprise when he created this gorgeous masterpiece for oboe, played here by our magnificent principal Robert Ingliss.

Vivaldi *The Four Seasons*

Every mood and movement of the seasons is here, from sticky summer heat to slip-slidin' on winter's ice. Concertmaster Eric Wyrick's virtuoso violin shines throughout.

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Xian Conducts *Carmina Burana* **New Jersey Symphony Classical**

Xian Zhang conductor

Andrew Adelson oboe d'amore

Jana McIntyre soprano

Barry Banks tenor

Hugh Russell baritone

Montclair State University Chorale | Heather J. Buchanan, director
New Jersey Symphony

Newark → Friday, March 1, 8 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Newark → Sunday, March 3, 3 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Augusta Read Thomas Selections from *Jubilee*

The New Yorker called this 2010 orchestral suite “joyous and electric.” Thomas’ concert-opener is perfectly titled and a superb way to help you shake off late winter.

J.S. Bach Oboe d'Amore Concerto

Your first time to hear the oboe d’amore? This duskier cousin of the modern oboe has a soulful, sweet sound that Bach adored and placed at the center of this piece of reverence and reflection.

Orff *Carmina Burana*

Medieval monks had more on their minds than scripture—women, beer and the ever-turning wheel of fate most prominent. Orff set their words to dramatically colorful music in his iconic *Carmina Burana*.

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Tchaikovsky’s Fifth Symphony

New Jersey Symphony Classical

Xian Zhang conductor

Tom Borrow piano

New Jersey Symphony

Newark → Thursday, March 14, 1:30 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Princeton → Friday, March 15, 8 pm, Richardson Auditorium

Newark → Saturday, March 16, 8 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Morristown → Sunday, March 17, 3 pm, Mayo Performing Arts Center

David Ludwig *NightVision*

The New Jersey Symphony premiered this fantastic music in 2000, catching Ludwig at the launch of a career that now finds him Dean of Juilliard. Hear again, or for the first time, the promise of a young artist in full command of a virtuoso orchestra.

Mozart Piano Concerto No. 24

You can say you heard him when, because young pianist Tom Borrow has been named “the

very definition of ‘one to watch’” (*International Piano*). He brings his jaw-dropping technique and poet’s soul to Mozart’s most dramatic concerto.

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5

Brass choruses will make the hall ring in this most beloved of Tchaikovsky’s six symphonies. The composer wrestled with fate in his Fifth, and filled it from start to finish with musical electricity and hope.

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Gil Shaham and Xian Zhang
New Jersey Symphony Classical

Xian Zhang conductor

Gil Shaham violin

New Jersey Symphony

Newark → Friday, March 22, 8 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Red Bank → Saturday, March 23, 8 pm, Count Basie Center for the Arts

Newark → Sunday, March 24, 3 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Mozart Serenade No. 11

A little suite for winds meant as background music to a Viennese party. Mozart never did anything halfway, though, and this Serenade is a jewel box holding his most touching melodies.

Chevalier de Saint-Georges Violin Concerto No. 9

Finally getting its due, this French-Creole composer’s violin writing is a high-water mark of 18th-century grace. And there is no more graceful violinist to make these lines sing than the soulful Gil Shaham.

J.S. Bach Violin Concerto No. 1

Every bar bristles with brilliance, leaps of melody and delicious new harmonies. Bach wrote hundreds of pieces, but none more beautiful than this, seemingly tailor-fit for the gifts of our guest Gil Shaham.

Mozart *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*

In the century before recorded sound, Mozart made dinner music like this. But every minute of this serenade for strings is so full of unbridled joy—no wonder it is his greatest hit.

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***Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* in Concert**

New Jersey Symphony at the Movies

Morristown → Thursday, April 4, 7:30 pm, Mayo Performing Arts Center

Red Bank → Friday, April 5, 8 pm, Count Basie Center for the Arts

New Brunswick → Saturday, April 6, 8 pm, State Theatre New Jersey

Newark → Sunday, April 7, 3 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

New Jersey Symphony

Coming to New Jersey from a galaxy far, far away—experience *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* like never before as your New Jersey Symphony performs John Williams' Oscar-winning score live to the entire film. "You must feel the Force around you..." In the spectacular climactic sixth episode of the Star Wars saga, Darth Vader readies the second Death Star to unleash the final blow to the Rebel Alliance. Luke Skywalker joins R2-D2, C-3PO and Princess Leia to free Han Solo from Jabba the Hutt and launch a desperate attack upon the entire Imperial Fleet. Watch the complete film unfold as the New Jersey Symphony performs John Williams' legendary score live.

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April 6 performance presented in collaboration with State Theatre New Jersey.

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Jennifer Koh and Jun Märkl Return!

New Jersey Symphony Classical

Jun Märkl conductor

Jennifer Koh violin

New Jersey Symphony

Newark → Saturday, May 4, 8 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Morristown → Sunday, May 5, 3 pm, Mayo Performing Arts Center

Liszt *Prometheus*

Liszt was a fire-breather of a composer, perhaps inspired by the Greek god himself who gave humans fire. His *Prometheus* lets the orchestra tell the riveting ancient story of theft, punishment and triumph.

Tyshawn Sorey *For Marcos Balter* (New Jersey Symphony Co-Commission)

Newark's own Tyshawn Sorey has a dozen surprises up his sleeve in his new work, especially as he makes superstar soloist Jennifer Koh "disappear" into the orchestra. The effect is singularly haunting and beautiful.

Brahms/Schoenberg Piano Quartet No. 1 (Orchestrated)

The composer of four magnificent symphonies, Brahms also wrote reams of gorgeous chamber pieces. His Piano Quartet is arranged so vividly for orchestra that it could be Brahms' Fifth.

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Jeremy Denk, Anna Clyne, Beethoven's "Eroica"

New Jersey Symphony Classical

Markus Stenz conductor

Jeremy Denk piano

New Jersey Symphony

Princeton → Friday, May 17, 8 pm, Richardson Auditorium

Newark → Saturday, May 18, 8 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Newark → Sunday, May 19, 3 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Berlioz *Roman Carnival* Overture

Berlioz exploded every idea of what an orchestra could do and be, and his *Roman Carnival* Overture was his calling card. It shows the New Jersey Symphony in all its full-throated glory.

Anna Clyne Piano Concerto (New Jersey Symphony Co-Commission)

Having written for every top-flight orchestra in America, Anna Clyne's latest is for us and with the extraordinary Jeremy Denk as soloist. Find out why *The New York Times* chose Anna Clyne for their feature "Five Minutes that Will Make You Love Classical Music."

Beethoven Symphony No. 3, "Eroica"

Fifty minutes that made Beethoven's name. His Third was so bold and unconventional, that it still sounds new 200-plus years after its premiere.

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Discover Beethoven's Eroica

New Jersey Symphony Family Concert: A Music Discovery Zone

Newark → Saturday, May 18, 2 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

New Jersey Symphony

Discover what makes a live orchestra concert so special. We'll take a deep dive into Beethoven's "Eroica"—his breakout Third Symphony that broke all the rules and forged a new future for the symphonic form. Inspired by Leonard Bernstein's masterful way of putting young audiences at the center of music-making, this interactive concert will feature inside tips, listening cues and fun facts that make for the perfect Saturday afternoon family outing! New Jersey Symphony Family Concert: A Music Discovery Zone is presented in NJPAC's Prudential Hall.

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Montero Performs Montero plus Bizet's *Carmen*

New Jersey Symphony Classical

Xian Zhang conductor

Gabriela Montero piano

New Jersey Symphony

Newark → Thursday, May 30, 1:30 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Newark → Friday, May 31, 8 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

New Brunswick → Sunday, June 2, 3 pm, State Theatre New Jersey

Villa-Lobos *Bachianas Brasileiras* No. 4

Blend Brazilian soul with Bach's inspiration and you have this gorgeous 15-minute mini-symphony, Villa-Lobos' joyous homage to his beautiful South American home.

Gabriela Montero Piano Concerto No. 1, "Latin"

Famed for her one-of-a-kind technique and stunning jazzy improvisations as encores, Montero puts it all together in her First Concerto, filled with Venezuelan heart and get-on-your-feet dance.

Bizet Selections from *Carmen*

A Frenchman obsessed with Spain, Bizet brought the smoldering Spanish anti-heroine

Carmen to life for the stage and the opera world was never the same. One instantly recognizable tune follows another in this brilliant orchestral suite crafted from the opera.

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Season Finale Daniil Trifonov Plays Gershwin **New Jersey Symphony Classical**

Xian Zhang conductor

Daniil Trifonov piano

New Jersey Symphony

Princeton → Friday June 7, 8 pm, Richardson Auditorium

Red Bank → Saturday June 8, 8 pm, Count Basie Center for the Arts

Newark → Sunday June 9, 3 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Daniel Bernard Roumain New Work (World Premiere, New Jersey Symphony Commission)

The New Jersey Symphony premieres an all-new commission from Resident Artistic Catalyst Daniel Bernard Roumain. A master storyteller, DBR will continue to wow New Jersey audiences with his genre-bending music.

Gershwin/arr. Bennett *Porgy and Bess*: A Symphonic Picture

Gershwin's landmark opera spun off so many great tunes—"Summertime," "It Ain't Necessarily So" and a dozen others will have you singing your way into summer.

Gershwin Concerto in F

Proving he was way more than a one-hit wonder after his *Rhapsody in Blue*, Gershwin poured the energy of Manhattan on a Saturday night into this sparkler for piano and orchestra. Superstar Daniil Trifonov wraps up our season with a bang.

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