

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY

XIAN ZHANG MUSIC DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Danny DeVito live narrates *Matilda* in Concert with the New Jersey Symphony

***Matilda* composer David Newman conducts**

One night only:

**March 22, 2024, at 7:30 pm, at State Theatre New Jersey
in New Brunswick**

NEWARK, NJ – This March, come see New Jersey native Danny DeVito narrate the film *Matilda*, while David Newman’s enchanting score is performed live to picture! Acclaimed actor, producer and director Danny DeVito will join famed film composer David Newman and the New Jersey Symphony in a very special performance of *Matilda* in Concert at State Theatre New Jersey in New Brunswick, NJ, on March 22, 2024. The performance will also feature celebrity guest appearances by actors who played characters in *Matilda*, including Pam Ferris (Trunchbull), Rhea Perlman (Mrs. Wormwood) and Mara Wilson (Matilda).

The performance was originally scheduled for September 9, 2023, and was postponed due to the SAG-AFTRA strike. The concert has been rescheduled to March 22, 2024.

Based on Roald Dahl’s award-winning book and directed by Danny DeVito, from a screenplay by Nicholas Kazan & Robin Swicord, *Matilda* is the story of a little girl (Mara Wilson) who loves books and wants to go to school. Belittled by mean parents and terrorized by a disparaging school headmistress, Matilda uses her secrete telekinetic gift to stand up for herself, her friends, and the lovely Ms. Honey. This humorous and touching coming-of-age story will have audience members young and old humming in their seats!

Celebrating over 25 years, the film adaptation of Road Dahl’s literary masterpiece, expertly brought to life by Danny DeVito, is experiencing a remarkable resurgence in popular culture, now attaining a revered status among enthusiasts. This revival has manifested in various ways, including cast reunions, captivating BuzzFeed re-

enactments, a Tony Award-winning musical and the recent publication of “Where Am I Now?” by Mara Wilson, the actress who portrayed the indomitable Matilda in the film. Recognized as one of the top 10 children’s novels by the esteemed School Library Journal, *Matilda* the movie has firmly secured its place as one of the most cherished and enduring tales for young readers worldwide.

Concert tickets go on sale to the general public on Tuesday, December 18, 2023, at 10 am, and are available online at njsymphony.org/matilda or by phone at 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476).

An add-on VIP experience package is available, which includes a post-concert meet and greet and photo opp with Danny DeVito and David Newman. The VIP experience tickets can be included for an additional fee when ordering concert tickets.

More information and tickets are available at njsymphony.org/matilda.

Matilda in Concert

Friday, March 22, 7:30 pm
State Theatre of New Jersey in New Brunswick

Danny DeVito narrator
David Newman conductor
New Jersey Symphony

Danny DeVito

Danny DeVito has amassed a formidable and versatile body of work as an actor, producer and director that spans the stage, television and film.

Daniel Michael DeVito Jr. was born on November 17, 1944, in Neptune, New Jersey, to Italian American parents. While growing up in Asbury Park, his parents sent him to private schools. He attended Our Lady of Mount Carmel grammar school and Oratory Prep School. Following graduation in 1962, he took a job as a cosmetician at his sister’s beauty salon. A year later, he enrolled at New York’s American Academy of Dramatic Arts so he could learn more about cosmetology. While at the academy, he fell in love with acting and decided to further pursue an acting career. During this time, he met another aspiring actor Michael Douglas at the National Playwrights Conference in Waterford, Connecticut. The two would later go on to collaborate on numerous projects. Soon after he also met an actress named Rhea Perlman. The two fell in love and moved in together. They were married in 1982 and had three children together.

In 1968, Danny landed his first part in a movie when he appeared as a thug in the obscure *Dreams of Glass* (1970). Despite this minor triumph, Danny became discouraged with the film industry and decided to focus on stage productions. He

made his Off-Broadway debut in 1969 in *The Man With the Flower in His Mouth*. He followed this up with stage roles in *The Shrinking Bride*, and *Lady Liberty*. In 1975, he was approached by director Milos Forman and Michael Douglas about appearing in the film version of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975), which would star Jack Nicholson in the leading role. With box office success almost guaranteed and a chance for national exposure, Danny agreed to the role. The movie became a huge hit, both critically and financially, and still ranks today as one of the greatest movies of all time. Unfortunately, the movie did very little to help Danny's career. In the years following, he was relegated to small movie roles and guest appearances on television shows. His big break came in 1978 when he auditioned for a role on an ABC sitcom pilot called *Taxi* (1978), which centered around taxicab drivers at a New York City garage. Danny auditioned for the role of dispatcher Louie DePalma. At the audition, the producers told Danny that he needed to show more attitude in order to get the part. He then slammed down the script and yelled, "Who wrote this sh**?" The producers, realizing he was perfect for the part, brought him on board. The show was a huge success, running from 1978 to 1983.

Louie DePalma, played flawlessly by Danny, became one of the most memorable (and reviled) characters in television history. While he was universally hated by TV viewers, he was well-praised by critics, winning an Emmy award and being nominated three other times. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Danny maintained his status as a great character actor with memorable roles in movies like *Romancing the Stone* (1984), *Ruthless People* (1986), *Throw Momma from the Train* (1987) and *Twins* (1988). He also had a great deal of success behind the camera, directing movies like *The War of the Roses* (1989) and *Hoffa* (1992). In 1992, Danny was introduced to a new generation of moviegoers when he was given the role of The Penguin/Oswald Cobblepot in Tim Burton's highly successful *Batman Returns* (1992). This earned him a nomination for Best Villain at the MTV Movie Awards. That same year, along with his wife Rhea Perlman, Danny co-founded Jersey Films, which has produced many popular films and TV shows, including *Pulp Fiction* (1994), *Get Shorty* (1995), *Man on the Moon* (1999) and *Erin Brockovich* (2000). DeVito has many directing credits to his name as well, including *Throw Momma from the Train* (1987), *The War of the Roses* (1989), *Hoffa* (1992), *Death to Smoochy* (2002) and the upcoming *St. Sebastian*.

In 2006, he returned to series television in the FX comedy series *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia* (2005). With a prominent role in a hit series, DeVito's comic talents were now on display for a new generation of television viewers. In 2012, he provided the title voice role in Dr. Seuss' *The Lorax* (2012).

David Newman

David Newman is one of today's most accomplished creators of music for film. In his 30-year career he has scored more than 110 films, ranging from *War of the Roses*, *Matilda*, *Bowfinger*, and *Heathers* to the more recent *Girls Trip*, *Night School* and *Serenity*. His music has brought to life the critically acclaimed dramas *Brokedown*

Palace and Hoffa; comedies such as *Galaxy Quest* and *Throw Momma from the Train*; and award-winning animated films *Ice Age*, *The Brave Little Toaster*, and *Anastasia*. He holds an Academy Award nomination for his score to *Anastasia*.

In 2021, after a decade of conducting numerous live music-to-film concerts for the classic *West Side Story* film, Newman arranged the score for Steven Spielberg's bold new re-imagining of the legendary Leonard Bernstein & Stephen Sondheim musical, earning him a Grammy nomination in 2022.

As a highly sought-after conductor, Newman appears with leading orchestras throughout the world including the New York and Los Angeles philharmonics, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, the Schleswig-Holstein Festival Orchestra, San Diego Symphony, Boston Symphony Orchestra, The Philadelphia Orchestra, The Chicago Symphony, The San Francisco Symphony and the Cleveland Orchestra. In Fall 2017, Mr. Newman conducted the world premiere of John Williams' epic film series, *Star Wars - Episodes IV, V, VI and VII*, with the New York Philharmonic. In Summer 2020, he conducted the world premiere of his score for the film *Galaxy Quest* live with the San Diego Symphony during Comic-Con and in Fall 2021, he was invited by the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures in Los Angeles to conduct their inaugural concerts of *The Wizard of Oz*, live to picture, with the American Youth Symphony.

The son of nine-time Oscar-winning composer Alfred Newman, the creation and conducting of music has been a lifelong zeal for Newman. An active composer for the concert hall, he has composed works that have been performed by the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Indianapolis Symphony, and Long Beach Symphony, as well as at the Ravinia Festival, Spoleto Festival USA and Chicago's Grant Park Music Festival. He also composed a violin-orchestra suite for prodigious Korean American violinist Sarah Chang based on the songs from *West Side Story*.

Passionate about nurturing the next generation of musicians, Newman has served on the faculty of the Aspen Music Festival in the Film Scoring Program.

New Jersey Symphony

The Emmy and Grammy Award-winning New Jersey Symphony is redefining what it means to be a nationally leading, relevant orchestra in the 21st century. The Symphony is renewing its deeply rooted commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion by championing new, and often local, artists; engaging audiences for whom the inspiring depth and breadth of classical music will be a new experience; and incorporating the broadest possible representation in all aspects of our organization—all to better reflect and serve our vibrant communities. Since 2021, Music Director Xian Zhang has worked together with composer, violinist, educator and social-justice advocate Daniel Bernard Roumain, the orchestra's Resident Artistic Catalyst, to offer programming that connects with diverse communities in Newark and throughout New Jersey.

Internationally renowned Chinese American conductor Xian Zhang began her tenure as the New Jersey Symphony's current Music Director in 2016. Since her arrival at the New Jersey Symphony, Zhang has revitalized programming with an industry-leading commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in mainstage concerts. In its second century of bringing concerts to the people of New Jersey, the Symphony will present audience favorites in 2023–24 including Dvorak's "New World" Symphony, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*, violinist Joshua Bell leading the orchestra in Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto and pianist Daniil Trifonov playing Gershwin's Concerto in F. New Jersey Symphony co-commissions include works by internationally-renowned living composers: Anna Clyne's *ATLAS* and Jessie Montgomery's *Snapshots*. Composers Rob Kapilow and Daniel Bernard Roumain will present world premieres.

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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Press Contact

Geoffrey Anderson

Vice President of Marketing & External Affairs

New Jersey Symphony

973.735.1713

ganderson@njsymphony.org

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