

THE NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA APPOINTS JACQUES LACOMBE AS MUSIC DIRECTOR



Newark, NJ, October 20, 2009 — The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra Board of Trustees and President & CEO André Gremillet announced today the appointment of conductor **Jacques Lacombe** as the Orchestra's 13th Music Director, effective September 1, 2010, for a three-year term. Maestro Lacombe becomes Music Director Designate effective October 20, 2009. He succeeds Neeme Järvi, who led the Orchestra from 2004 to 2009 in an extremely successful tenure. The announcement concludes an extensive search led by a special Search Committee comprised of NJSO musicians, members of the Board of Trustees, administrative staff and community leaders.

During the 2008–09 season, Lacombe's performance of *Carmina Burana* with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra received national accolades. *The Star-Ledger* raved, "[Jacques Lacombe] is a musician's conductor, the rapport he achieved in rehearsal coming through on stage; blessed with a rare memory, he worked without a score, maximizing his eye contact with the orchestra and chorus, the intimacy aurally apparent."

Lacombe has distinguished himself internationally in a highly diverse repertoire of symphonic, operatic and choral works. Lacombe's first appearance with the Orchestra as Music Director Designate will be on Thursday, April 22, 2010, at 1:30 p.m. at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark in a program featuring works by Brahms and Dvořák. He will also lead the NJSO in its last "Best of ..." concerts of the season, from May 20 to 23, 2010, in four venues throughout the state.

Lacombe will begin his first full season as NJSO Music Director in 2010–11. His responsibilities as Music Director will include the development and supervision of the orchestra and its programs, as well as the selection

of visiting artists and ensembles. He will also work in collaboration with Gremillet on the creation and implementation of the Orchestra's future initiatives and pursuits.

“To say that Jacques Lacombe impressed in his performance of *Carmina Burana* is an understatement. His command of the ensemble and his stage presence electrified the Orchestra and audience alike,” said Ruth Lipper, Co-Chair of the NJSO Board of Trustees and Chair of the Music Director Search Committee. “We are thrilled to welcome Maestro Lacombe to the NJSO family as Music Director Designate, and we cannot wait for all of our communities to experience his extraordinary artistry and deep commitment to the future of the NJSO.”

“The breadth and depth of Jacques' artistic expertise and innate musicianship, combined with his ability to engage musicians and patrons alike, epitomizes what a music director should be. With him at the helm, the NJSO will continue to reach new artistic heights and elevate the patron experience. He is eager to connect with all of the NJSO's diverse communities and to get involved with our education programs, which are paramount to the Orchestra's mission. I look forward to the immediate impact his energy and passion will have on the NJSO in all of its programs and goals for the future,” said Gremillet.

Lacombe said: “Less than a year ago, I first stood at the NJSO podium, conducting *Carmina Burana*. Leading these world-class musicians was such an exhilarating experience for me as a conductor, and meeting NJSO patrons showed me how unique the Orchestra's community is. This orchestra plays with such passion, and the chemistry between us has been invigorating. I am proud to have the opportunity to nurture this special energy as the Orchestra's next Music Director.”

NJSO Principal Cellist Jonathan Spitz, a member of the Music Director Search Committee, said: “From our first rehearsal with Jacques, it was clear that the NJSO was working with a conductor of rare gifts. He conducts with great clarity and authority, and drew from us performances that were insightful, satisfying and exciting.”

Jacques Lacombe

From the beginning of his career, New Jersey Symphony Orchestra Music Director Designate Jacques Lacombe has been highly praised as a remarkable conductor whose artistic integrity and rapport with orchestras have propelled him to international stature.

Lacombe began the 2009–10 season with his debut with the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden, leading an all-star cast of *Tosca*. He led *Ariadne auf Naxos* for his debut with the Bavarian State Opera in Munich. He will lead *Turandot* and *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* for Opéra de Monte-Carlo and *Der fliegende Holländer*, *Eugene Onegin* and concert performances of Waltershausen's rarely heard *Oberst Chabert* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin. In addition to multiple engagements with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, Lacombe appears with the Edmonton and Québec Symphony Orchestras this season. Lacombe is also Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Orchestre Symphonique de Trois-Rivières in Quebec.

Career highlights include his relationship with the Montreal Symphony. From 2002 to 2006, he led the orchestra in more than 75 performances as its principal guest conductor. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut conducting *Werther* and returned for *Die Fledermaus*. Lacombe has led Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Zemlinsky's *Der*

Traumgörge and new productions of *Der fliegende Holländer* and *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, as well as the world premiere of Vladimir Cosma's *Fanny et Marius* with Angela Gheorghiu and Roberto Alagna. He served for three years as music director of both orchestra and opera with the Philharmonie de Lorraine in France.

Lacombe has conducted the symphony orchestras of Toronto, Vancouver and the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, as well as European orchestras including those of Toulouse, Halle, Liege, Avignon and the Royal Flemish Philharmonic. He has recorded for the Analekta label and has been broadcast on PBS, the CBC, Arte TV in France and on Hungarian Radio-Television.

Born in Cap-de-la-Madeleine, Quebec, Lacombe received his musical training at the Conservatoire de Musique Montréal and at the Hochschule für Musik in Vienna.

The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra

The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, now in its 87th season, is comprised of some of the country's finest musicians. The Orchestra is proud to have Jacques Lacombe as its Music Director Designate and Neeme Järvi as its Conductor Laureate & Artistic Advisor. Past Music Directors have included Zdenek Macal, Hugh Wolff and Henry Lewis. Artistic excellence, innovative programming and community engagement are hallmarks of the Orchestra's mission. To best serve the people of New Jersey, the Orchestra brings its programs to seven different venues throughout the state, including NJPAC in Newark, State Theatre in New Brunswick, Richardson Auditorium in Princeton, Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank, bergenPAC in Englewood, Patriots Theater at The War Memorial in Trenton and Community Theatre at Mayo Center for the Performing Arts in Morristown. Education and outreach programs enrich the listening experience for children and adults alike. The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra Broadcast Series, presented in part by the Merck Company Foundation, is a syndicated radio program broadcast regionally and throughout North America. Continental Airlines is the official airline of the NJSO.

For more information about the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, visit www.njsymphony.org or e-mail information@njsymphony.org. Tickets are available for purchase by phone at 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/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, along with many other foundations, corporations and individual donors.

National Press Representative: Cohn Dutcher Associates

Lois Cohn | 917.733.8252 | lcohn@cohndutcher.com

Laura Malick | 917.339.7183 | lmalick@cohndutcher.com

Local Press Representative: New Jersey Symphony Orchestra

Victoria McCabe | 973.624.3713, ext. 234 | vmccabe@njsymphony.org

###