

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

State Theatre New Jersey presents

Bamberg Symphony

Christoph Eschenbach, *conductor* / Ray Chen, *violin soloist*

PROGRAM: MOZART, *Don Giovanni* Overture; MENDELSSOHN Violin Concerto in E minor, Op. 64;
and MAHLER Symphony No. 5 in C-sharp minor

Tuesday, February 7, 2016, 8pm / \$35-\$70

Ticket Office: 732-246-SHOW (7469)

New Brunswick, NJ (January 18, 2017)—State Theatre New Jersey presents the **Bamberg Symphony** on **Tuesday, February 7, 2017 at 8pm**. Led by **Christoph Eschenbach**, the program will include Mozart's *Don Giovanni* Overture; Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E minor, Op. 64; and Mahler's Symphony No. 5 in C-sharp minor. *Tickets range from \$35-\$70.*

Returning to the U.S. for the first time since 2012, the storied Bamberg Symphony of Germany will embark on a nine-city tour with Christoph Eschenbach conducting and with violin soloist **Ray Chen** performing the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto in E minor, Op. 64 in New Brunswick. With more than 50 years of musical collaboration between them, Eschenbach and Bamberg present a powerful artistic force, displaying both the orchestra's historical distinction and its contemporary outlook, embodied in the young violinist, a protégé of the conductor.

The Bamberg Symphony has always enjoyed a special status in the music world; having performed over 7,000 concerts in more than 60 countries and over 500 cities. With that record, the Bamberg Symphony is rightly considered among the top German touring orchestras. The circumstances of its birth make the Bamberg Symphony a mirror to German history. In 1946 former members of Prague's German Philharmonic met fellow musicians who had also been obliged to flee their homes. In Bamberg they founded the Bamberger Tonkünstler Orchester, later renamed the Bamberger Symphoniker. This link with Prague's Orchestra makes Bamberg the inheritor of a musical tradition stretching back to the 19th, and even 18th centuries, to Mahler and Mozart—230 years of Bohemian sound.

Evidence of the outstanding reputation it enjoys everywhere comes in constant invitations to visit leading festivals and to tour at home and abroad, and in prizes for the Orchestra's recordings, including the MIDEM Classical Award, the International Toblach Composing Hut Record Prize, and the ECHO Klassik.

CHRISTOPH ESCHENBACH, *conductor*

The Bamberg Symphony and Christoph Eschenbach—their prolific story began over 50 years ago, in October 1965, when the conductor and soloist made his first appearance with the Orchestra as guest pianist. Over a decade later, in 1977, he conducted the Bamberg Symphony for the first time. Since then, he has led the Orchestra in over 150 concerts in Bamberg as well as on tours to France, the USA, South America, and Japan. In recognition of this extraordinary collaboration, the Bamberg Symphony appointed him as its Honorary Conductor in January 2016.

Eschenbach has been the Music Director of the Tonhalle-Gesellschaft in Zurich (1982 to 1986), the Houston Symphony Orchestra (1988 to 1999), and the NDR Symphony Orchestra in Hamburg (1998 to 2004). After 10 years as Music Director of the Orchestre de Paris, from September 2000 to August 2010, and four years for the Philadelphia Orchestra, from September 2003 to 2008, he became, in September 2010, Music Director of the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and the Washington National Symphony.

As a distinguished guest conductor Eschenbach is in demand with the finest orchestras and opera houses throughout the world as well as prestigious festivals. His repertoire ranges from J.S. Bach to the late 20th and early 21st-centuries, and reflects his commitment to not just canonical works but also to the music of our time.

Born in Breslau, Germany (today Wroclaw, Poland), Eschenbach studied piano with professor Eliza Hansen and won numerous piano competitions at a young age. In 1965, the first prize of the Clara Haskil competition in Lucerne launched his career as a soloist. In demand worldwide by top concert halls and orchestras, he met George Szell who invited him to tour with The Cleveland Orchestra. In the same period he developed an artistic collaboration with Herbert von Karajan as well. He made his U.S. debut in 1975 with the San Francisco Symphony.

RAY CHEN, *violin soloist*

Winner of the Queen Elisabeth (2009) and Yehudi Menuhin (2008) Competitions, Ray Chen is among the most compelling young violinists today. He has released three critically acclaimed albums on Sony: a recital program, *Virtuoso*, of works by Bach, Tartini, Franck, and Wieniawski, and the Mendelssohn and Tchaikovsky concertos with Swedish Radio Orchestra and Daniel Harding.

Following the success of these recordings, Chen was profiled by *The Strad* and *Gramophone* magazines as “the one to watch.” *Virtuoso* was distinguished with the prestigious ECHO Klassik award. His third recording, an all-Mozart album with Christoph Eschenbach and the Schleswig-Holstein Festival Orchestra, was released in January 2014.

Ray Chen continues to win the admiration of fans and fellow musicians worldwide. On Bastille Day in 2015, he joined Daniele Gatti and the Orchestre National de France for a televised concert on the Champs-de-Mars in Paris in front of an audience of over 800,000. Other highlights of the past season include his debut with the Rotterdam Philharmonic, a recital at the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, and a second engagement with Gatti and the Orchestre National de France.

In 2012 he became the youngest soloist ever to perform in the televised Nobel Prize Concert for the Nobel Laureates and the Swedish Royal Family. His Carnegie Hall debut with the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic and Sakari Oramo, as well as his sold-out Musikverein (Vienna) concert with the Gewandhaus Orchestra and Riccardo Chailly, were met with standing ovations. Ray Chen was a Junge Wilde artist at the Konzerthaus Dortmund between 2012 and 2015.

The State Theatre New Jersey Orchestra Series is sponsored by The Blanche & Irving Laurie Foundation.

For tickets or more information, call the State Theatre New Jersey ticket office at 732-246-SHOW (7469), or visit us online at StateTheatreNJ.org. The State Theatre New Jersey ticket office, located at 15 Livingston Ave, New Brunswick NJ, is open Monday through Friday from 10am to 6pm; Saturday from 1pm to 5pm; and at least three hours prior to curtain on performance dates unless otherwise specified. For information on group outings and discounts, call 732-247-7200, ext. 536. *Some additional ticket and transaction fees may apply.*

State Theatre New Jersey—creating extraordinary experiences through the power of live performance. The theater exists to enrich people’s lives, contribute to a vital urban environment, and build future audiences by presenting the finest performing artists and entertainers and fostering lifetime appreciation for the performing arts through education. State Theatre New Jersey’s programs are made possible, in part, by funding from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, and contributions from numerous corporations, foundations, and individuals. The Heldrich is the official hotel of State Theatre New Jersey. Magic 98.3 is the official radio station of State Theatre New Jersey. The Star-Ledger is the official newspaper of State Theatre New Jersey. United is the official airline of State Theatre New Jersey.

STATE THEATRE NEW JERSEY

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Online - StateTheatreNJ.org

PHOTOS AND INTERVIEWS FURNISHED UPON REQUEST

Please contact Kelly Blithe at
732-247-7200, ext. 542 or by email at kblithe@StateTheatreNJ.org.

Information in this release is current as of January 18, 2017.
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