

Capital Philharmonic of New Jersey Presents “An American Journey”

Season Finale Concert

 **Sunday, May 17th, 2026 — 4:00 PM**

 **New Jersey State Museum Auditorium, Trenton, NJ**

205 West State Street, Trenton, NJ 08625

TRENTON, NJ — The Capital Philharmonic of New Jersey invites the community to celebrate the close of its concert season with “An American Journey,” an engaging program conducted by Joshua Gersen on Sunday, May 17th, 2026, at 4:00 PM at the New Jersey State Museum Auditorium. With the nation’s 250th anniversary on the horizon, this program weaves together works that capture the heart and soul of America through music.

About the Program

The evening opens with *Luminosity* by New Jersey composer Chris Rogerson (b. 1988), a vibrant four-minute work that sets the stage with brilliance and energy. The concert then showcases the winner of the Youth Concerto Competition, a cherished tradition that spotlights the next generation of outstanding young musicians from our region.

Aaron Copland’s *Lincoln Portrait* follows. This is one of the most beloved works in the American orchestral canon. Featuring spoken narration drawn from the words of Abraham Lincoln, this powerful fifteen-minute piece will be brought to life by the Reverend Rupert A. Hall Jr., whose commanding presence and oratorical gift promise a deeply moving performance.

The program concludes with Antonín Dvořák’s *Symphony No. 9 in E Minor “From the New World”* - perhaps the greatest musical love letter ever written to America. Composed in 1893 during Dvořák’s time in New York, the symphony remains a timeless tribute to the American spirit, making it a perfect centerpiece for the Nation’s upcoming 250th anniversary celebration.

Program at a Glance

- Chris Rogerson (b. 1988): *Luminosity* (~4 min.)
- Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904): *Cello Concerto in B minor* (~10–15 min.)
- Aaron Copland (1900–1990): *Lincoln Portrait* (~15 min.)
- Dvořák: *Symphony No. 9, “From the New World”* (~40 min.)

Spotlight: Youth Concerto Competition Winner

The Capital Philharmonic is proud to announce Benjamin Mandigo as the 2026 Youth Concerto Competition Winner. He is a 10th grade cellist at Juilliard Pre-College and has been the recipient of the Grand Prix Prize at the New York Concert Festival International Competition and Grand Prize at the Young Artist International Premier Competition. Benjamin will be performing the first movement of Dvořák's *Cello Concerto in B minor*.

The Youth Concerto Competition is a cornerstone of the Capital Philharmonic's commitment to nurturing the next generation of exceptional musicians in our community. Benjamin's selection as the 2026 winner reflects both his extraordinary talent and the bright future of classical music. We invite audiences to witness this rising star in a performance that is sure to be an unforgettable highlight of "An American Journey."

About Conductor Joshua Gersen

Joshua Gersen brings a fresh and inspiring perspective to the podium as conductor of this season finale. A former Assistant Conductor of the New York Philharmonic and a frequent guest with orchestras across North America, Gersen is widely recognized for his expressive style, adventurous programming, and deep commitment to music education and contemporary composers. His leadership promises to bring both rigor and warmth to this celebration of American voices.

About Narrator Reverend Rupert A. Hall Jr.

After serving as pastor of Turning Point United Methodist Church for eight years, Reverend Hall founded *Hope for the City*, a nonprofit dedicated to advancing community-based solutions to poverty and inequity in Trenton. Through partnerships and grassroots initiatives, the organization focuses on expanding access to essential resources, including food security programs, housing support, and educational outreach, continuing his longstanding commitment to meaningful, on-the-ground impact. A graduate of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and the Rutgers University School of Law, Reverend Hall brings a powerful combination of intellectual depth, spiritual insight, and commanding presence to his narration of Copland's *Lincoln Portrait*.

Tickets & Information

Tickets are available at capitalphilharmonic.org or by contacting the Capital Philharmonic of New Jersey directly. The New Jersey State Museum Auditorium is located at 205 West State Street, Trenton, NJ 08625. Plenty of street parking, and parking behind the auditorium.

Tickets are available at:

www.capitalphilharmonic.org

Media & Contact Information

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