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Issue 97 • December 2025

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NJ FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA PROMOTES TWO HOLIDAY CONCERTS

New Jersey Festival Orchestra ushers in the holiday season with two major December performances that showcase the full breadth of the orchestra's artistic range.

Under the direction of Maestro David Wroe, NJFO welcomes audiences to celebrate the magic of the season with Return of the 3 Holiday Tenors on December 6 and 7, followed by the orchestra's signature New Year's celebration, Broadway Through the Ages, on December 31 and January 1.

Return of the 3 Holiday Tenors features award-winning vocalists John Kun Park, Luke Norvell, and Michael DeShield, each bringing a distinct artistic profile to this beloved NJFO tradition. Park, praised for his "radiant lyricism," has appeared with major opera houses across the country. Norvell, known for his "effortless charm and ringing tenor," continues to shine as a rising star on both concert and operatic stages. DeShield, celebrated for his powerful presence and versatility, is a frequent soloist with ensembles throughout the Northeast.

The trio joins NJFO for a sparkling program of holiday favorites, classical tenor showpieces, and uplifting choral moments. They are joined by the Holy Trinity Choir of Westfield and Central Avenue Choir of Madison, adding festive warmth and community spirit to this seasonal celebration. Performances take place Saturday, December 6 at The Presbyterian Church in Westfield and Sunday, December 7 at Drew University in Madison.

The festivities continue with Broadway Through the Ages, NJFO's dazzling New Year's tradition performed in Westfield and Basking Ridge. This year's concert brings together a powerhouse lineup of guest artists: Tess Marshall, acclaimed for her magnetic stage presence and vocal

brilliance; Lisa Marie Rogali, a versatile performer equally at home in opera and musical theater; and Peter Kendall Clark, praised for his "commanding baritone and dramatic flair." This year's program also features stars from the Dance Theater of Harlem, adding movement, elegance, and theatrical artistry to this musical celebration. Together with NJFO, the ensemble leads audiences on a spirited journey through iconic Broadway classics.

"Both programs illuminate what music does best," said Maestro Wroe. "They bring people together, lift the spirit, and remind us of the joy and renewal this season represents."

RETURN OF THE 3 HOLIDAY TENORS

Sat Dec 6, 7 PM

The Presbyterian Church, Westfield

Sun Dec 7, 3 PM

Drew University, Madison

BROADWAY THROUGH THE AGES

Wed Dec 31, 5 PM

Westfield High School

Thu Jan 1, 2:30 PM

Sieminski Theater

Tickets are available at njfestivalorchestra.org
or by calling (908) 232-9400.

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NJFO NEW JERSEY FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA

Return of the 3 Holiday Tenors

 **SAT, Dec 6 at 7:00 pm**
The Presbyterian Church, Westfield

SUN, Dec 7 at 3:00 pm
Drew University, Madison

Renowned tenor fare, holiday classics, and winter-time favorites guaranteed to make the season merry.

**BROADWAY
THROUGH THE AGES** 

WED, Dec 31 at 5:00 **THURS, Jan 1 at 2:30**
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FALL FINANCIAL APPEAL

MADISON MONTHLY_{NJ}

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Madison Community House

Have you ever visited the Madison Community House (MCH) at 25 Cook Avenue? Perhaps you have attended an event or dropped off your children or grandchildren for some activity? For those who have not had the pleasure, it is a vibrant, cheerful place where numerous events are held and thousands of people of various ages come and go throughout the year. Community is the key word. Adults and children gather for basketball, exercise classes, knitting, language classes, scout events, recitals, book discussions, games, parties, concerts, plays, sport practices, various arts and music programs or organizational meetings. This is how communities are built.

The Thursday Morning Club which owns, operates and maintains the MCH, also operates the before and after school childcare program (BASCC) at each elementary school. The MCH offers meeting space for non-profits, civic organizations and is the home to EPOCH, an after-school enrichment program for children and teens with special needs. The MCH is open 365 days a year. It is a beautiful building with a variety of spaces. Recently it also housed the Prom Boutiques, Madison's Summer Arts program and an Easter Eggstravaganza.

The Thursday Morning Club was founded in 1896 and the Madison Community House in 1924. This community home for generations of adults and children has endured because of

committed volunteers and wise financial planning. You are part of that financial plan. Consider contributing today so that the MCH can be of service to the community for the next 99 years. The TMC wants to host a 200 year celebration just like they did for its centennial birthday!

Checks can be made to the Thursday Morning Club. Please add Annual Appeal to the memo line and mail to TMC PO Box 345 Madison, NJ 07940. For credit card donations, select **DONATE** at Thursdaymorningclub.org. The TMC is a 501 (c) (3) Non-profit so your gift is tax deductible.



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Sunday, December 7, 2025
3:00 pm
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9 Fun Facts about Hanukkah

Monday, December 1, 11:00 AM
Learn all about Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights, which begins on December 14.

Alzheimer's NJ Caregiver Support Group

Thursday, December 4, 10:30 AM
This group provides families and caregivers with the emotional support and education they need to better understand Alzheimer's Disease and other forms of dementia. A trained facilitator guides the group. Visit www.alznj.org to register and learn about their additional programs, or call the Center at 973-635-4565 to sign up for this group

End of Year Household Financial Tips

Monday, December 8, 11:00 AM
The close of the year is always a good time to review annual expenses and maximize savings. Learn a variety of useful household financial tips that can help you get the most from tax benefits, deplete flex spending accounts, cancel subscriptions no longer used, etc.

Holiday Blues

Wednesday, December 3, 12:00 PM
For some, the holidays are a joyous season to be celebrated with family and friends. For others, it can be a time of isolation and sadness. If you, or someone you know, is struggling with holiday blues you are definitely not alone. Join us to discuss this and learn ways to cope during these difficult times. Call the Center to sign up (973-635-4565). This program will also be available on-line.

The Senior Center will be closed for the holidays, Monday, December 22 through Friday, January 2.

ANNUAL HOLIDAY OPERA SPECTACULAR - DEC 7

December 7, 2025, 3:00 PM - Celebrate the magic of the season as Opera at Florham presents its beloved Annual Holiday Spectacular at St. Margaret of Scotland Church, 6 Sussex Avenue, Morristown, NJ.

After an incredible turnout at our recent Due Soprani e Un Tenore concert, you've GOT to get your tickets for the December 7th Holiday Spectacular! This concert will be held at St. Margaret of Scotland Church in Morristown, which offers FREE PARKING and plenty of room in the beautiful sanctuary—so gather your friends and family for an afternoon of festive music and joy.

Whether you're a lifelong Opera lover or discovering Opera at Florham for the first time, this delightful performance captures the spirit of the holidays through music that transcends generations. From beloved Arias to familiar seasonal melodies, the Holiday Spectacular is a joyful celebration of artistry and community -

perfect for audiences of all ages.

Opera at Florham's Holiday Spectacular is more than a concert—it's a heartwarming experience that has become a highlight of the holiday season across New Jersey. Each year, this festive performance transforms St. Margaret of Scotland Church into a winter wonderland of music, where world-class voices and live accompaniment inspire wonder and joy.

Expect to be swept away by the power of the human voice, the beauty of timeless melodies, and the spirit of togetherness that defines this special time of year. Whether you come to be uplifted, share the magic with family and friends, or simply savor the music of the season, the Holiday Spectacular is a gift you'll remember long after the final note.

Tickets are \$30 for general admission, with student discounts available. For tickets and more information, please visit operaatflorham.org. Purchase in advance on line or at the door.

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NEW JERSEY STATE SOCCER CUP FINALS

Two Madison Soccer Club

Madison Soccer Club’s 2015 Galaxy and 2014 Lightning Teams advanced to the finals of the New Jersey State Cup tournament held on November 1-2, 2025, at Maria Gatta Park in Oceanport, NJ.

Throughout the tournament, teams in multiple age groups and divisions compete in high-stakes, single elimination matches, with each victory

bringing teams closer to the State Cup title. The 2015 Galaxy Team triumphed as champions of the U11 Girls USYS Presidents Cup division of the State Cup tournament with a 3-1 win over Deptford Premiere FC. This was the first time a Madison Soccer Club Team has emerged victorious within the highly competitive Presidents Cup division. The 2014 Lightning Team competed against

NLSA Surf in the championship match of the U12 NJYS Challenge Cup Division of the State Cup tournament. The Lightning started off strong and played competitively ending the first half with a score of 0-0 but came up short in the second half as NLSA Surf walked away with a 4-0 victory. To learn more about the Madison Soccer Club visit www.madisonhardingsoccer.com.



(above) The Galaxy Team players include: Alexandra Vinciguerra, Annette Miola, Camille O’Connell, Charlotte Huthwaite, Ella Chandler, Ellie Hunzinger, Emmeline Perrin, Everly Sachs, Jemma Witte, Lola Kozy, Mackenzie Murphy, Penelope Karounis, and Sara Gobes.

(above) The Lightning Team players include: Ainsley Downing, Ava Gilmartin, Chloe McKeever, Claire Cushing, Claire Jochim, Gianna Forbes, Julia Librizzi, Kendall Richards, Olivia Petrich, Olivia Sullivan, and Reese Travis.

Courtesy Photo

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BREAKFAST WITH SANTA AT TWIN MAPLES

The entire family is invited to one of the areas loveliest historic homes, Twin Maples in Summit, on Saturday or Sunday, December 6 and 7 to join Santa for food and fun. The weekend event is hosted by the Fortnightly Club of Summit to benefit historic preservation. Festivities begin at 9:15 a.m. each day with a delicious Holiday 'Breakfast with Santa' served in the beautifully decorated ballroom with catering by 'What a Dish.' For those who can't make it for breakfast, 'Brunch with Santa' will be served each day at 11:15 a.m. All seatings include a children's buffet, adult served meal, photos with Santa, live music and more. This year's beautiful holiday décor features a 'Nutcracker' theme, so don't be surprised to see Clara, the Sugar Plum Fairies and some really naughty mice. Tickets to Santa at Twin Maples can be purchased at <https://www.fortnightlyclub.org> or through Eventbrite. Seating is limited. Pricing for Breakfast with Santa is \$45 for adults and \$20 for

children under 12. Please bring booster seats for children. Highchairs are not available.

The weekend event benefits the preservation of Twin Maples, 214 Springfield Avenue, Summit, a property on the New Jersey and National Historic Registers. The house was designed and built by New York architect Alfred F. Norris in the Colonial Revival style in 1908 and resembles the White House. The Fortnightly Club purchased the property in 1949. Today, Twin Maples serves as a clubhouse and hosts many community events and fundraisers. The Fortnightly Club of Summit, a non-profit organization founded in 1893, offers women camaraderie and a full calendar of interesting events and volunteer opportunities. The Club supports the preservation of Twin Maples, education, the arts and humanitarian efforts. For over thirty-years the Club has awarded annual scholarships to deserving young, local women. Fortnightly Club's 104 members are from

Summit and many neighboring towns. To join or for more information, visit the Club's website at www.fortnightlyclub.org.



(above) Santa visits with children at Twin Maples beside the Club's Annual Mitten Tree

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CELEBRATING JANE AUSTEN

Wed., Dec. 3, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Jane Austen at 250: Her Novels and Their Afterlives: Join Patricia Ard, Austen scholar and professor of literature, for a discussion of why Austen's six brilliant novels have earned her lasting fame and a worldwide readership across centuries. Hybrid: attend in-person (no registration required) or via Zoom (registration required at <https://tinyurl.com/mcl-austen3>).

Austen-themed Friday Afternoon Movies

@ 2:00 p.m.:

12/5: "Pride & Prejudice" (2005)

12/19: "Emma" (2020)

No registration required.

In Our Gallery and Exhibit Cases

Austen-themed art, books, artifacts, and other items will be on display during library open hours throughout December.

ALL AGES

Escape Room: The Mad Hatter's Hurried Hunt

Sat., Dec. 6, Mon., Dec. 8, & Tue., Dec. 9, various times

Help the Mad Hatter find the lost key to his treasured Time-Locked Tea Caddy! Participants 12 and under must be accompanied by an adult.

Registration required & more info at <https://tinyurl.com/mcl-madhatter>.

Spanish Conversation for Adults & Teens

Thu., Dec. 18, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Practice your Spanish language proficiency in a casual, small group environment. A basic level skill is recommended, but any skill level is welcome. No registration required.

ADULTS

Tuesday Book Club

Tue., 12/9, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

This month's book is North Woods by Daniel Mason. No registration needed.

Medieval Book Club

Wed., Dec. 10, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

We're reading Revelations of Divine Love by Julian of Norwich. No registration needed.

Socrates Cafe

Wed., Dec. 17, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

A discussion group using the dialogue of the Socratic Method. No registration required.

TEENS

Celebrate Taylor Swift's Birthday!

Fri., Dec. 12, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Celebrate Taylor's birthday (Dec. 13) one day early! Come to dance, sing-along, make friendship bracelets and other crafts, take pictures, and have fun with other Swifties! For ages 18 and under. Children under 12 must be with an adult at all times. Registration (required) at <https://tinyurl.com/mcl-swifties>.

CHILDREN

Children must be accompanied by an adult at all children's programs.

Move & Groove with Miss Jolie

Tue., Dec. 2, 10:00-10:45 a.m.

The always popular Miss Jolie returns for more music, movement and fun! For ages 6 & under. Registration required at inyurl.com/mcl-kids9.

A Dickens Tale


Thu., Dec. 11, 4:00-4:45 p.m.

Join old Scrooge, bumbling Bob Cratchit, Tiny Tim, old Jacob Marley, and the ghosts while discovering the true meaning of the season. For grades 2 & up. Registration required at <https://tinyurl.com/mcl-kids10>.

LEGO Club

Sat., Dec. 13, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Create and build using LEGO! For ages 4-12. Registration required at tinyurl.com/mcl-lego4.



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MADISON LIBRARY DECEMBER PROGRAMS

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You will receive Zoom instructions and online meeting information in your registration confirmation email in addition to a reminder email prior to the date of the program.

Surreal Sixties (Zoom)

Tuesday, December 2nd @ 7pm

Sixties Surreal, a scholarly reappraisal of American art from 1958 to 1972. American art of the 1960s that foregrounds the role of surrealism during a period of social and political upheaval. The range of works by artists include Diane Arbus, Lee Bontecou, Franklin Williams, Nancy Grossman, David Hammons, Yayoi Kusama, Romare Bearden and Louise Bourgeois, among others.

Adult Craft Club

Wednesday, December 3rd @ 6:00pm-8:00pm.

Join us for a fun evening of crafting and friendship. You will be making vintage tags that can be used for gifts, cards, decoration or to hang on your tree Everything will be upcycled to give it a new wonderful life. Everything needed will be provided. If you want to make one with old photos bring photocopies printed on a laser printer.

Adult Craft Club

Thursday, December 4th @ 10:30am-12:00pm.

Join us for a fun morning of crafting and friendship. This will be a drop in event and no registration is required. You will have the option of making multiple holiday crafts while supplies last. Everything needed will be supplied.

Knitting Club

Mondays from 1pm-3pm.

Join the knitters every Monday from 1-3pm for group knitting. All are welcome. No registration is required.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Christmas Tree: A Holiday Tradition (zoom)

Monday, December 8th @7:00pm.

This lecture explores the history behind one of New York City’s most beautiful and beloved Christmas traditions: The Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Neapolitan Baroque Angel Tree and Nativity Scene. We will dive into the story

behind the female artist and collector, Loretta Hines Howard, whose incredible vision and generosity led to the creation of this annual tradition, as well as the story behind many of the 18th-century artists and objects themselves.

Ruth Asawa: Sculptor, Educator, Arts Activist (Zoom)

Monday, December 15th @7:00pm

Ruth Asawa, Japanese American sculptor, educator, and arts activist, is known for her extensive body of work including paintings, printmaking, public commissions, and especially her wire sculptures that challenge conventional notions of material and form. A firm believer in the radical potential of arts education, she also devoted herself to expanding access to art-focused educational programs by co-founding the Alvarado Arts Workshop in 1968 and the first public arts high school in San Francisco in 1982, which was renamed the Ruth Asawa San Francisco School of the Arts in her honor in 2010. Come and hear about this pioneering and inspirational artist and be well prepared to enjoy MoMA's monumental Ruth Asawa retrospective opening in October of 2025.



(above) Artist Ruth Asawa

Courtesy Photo

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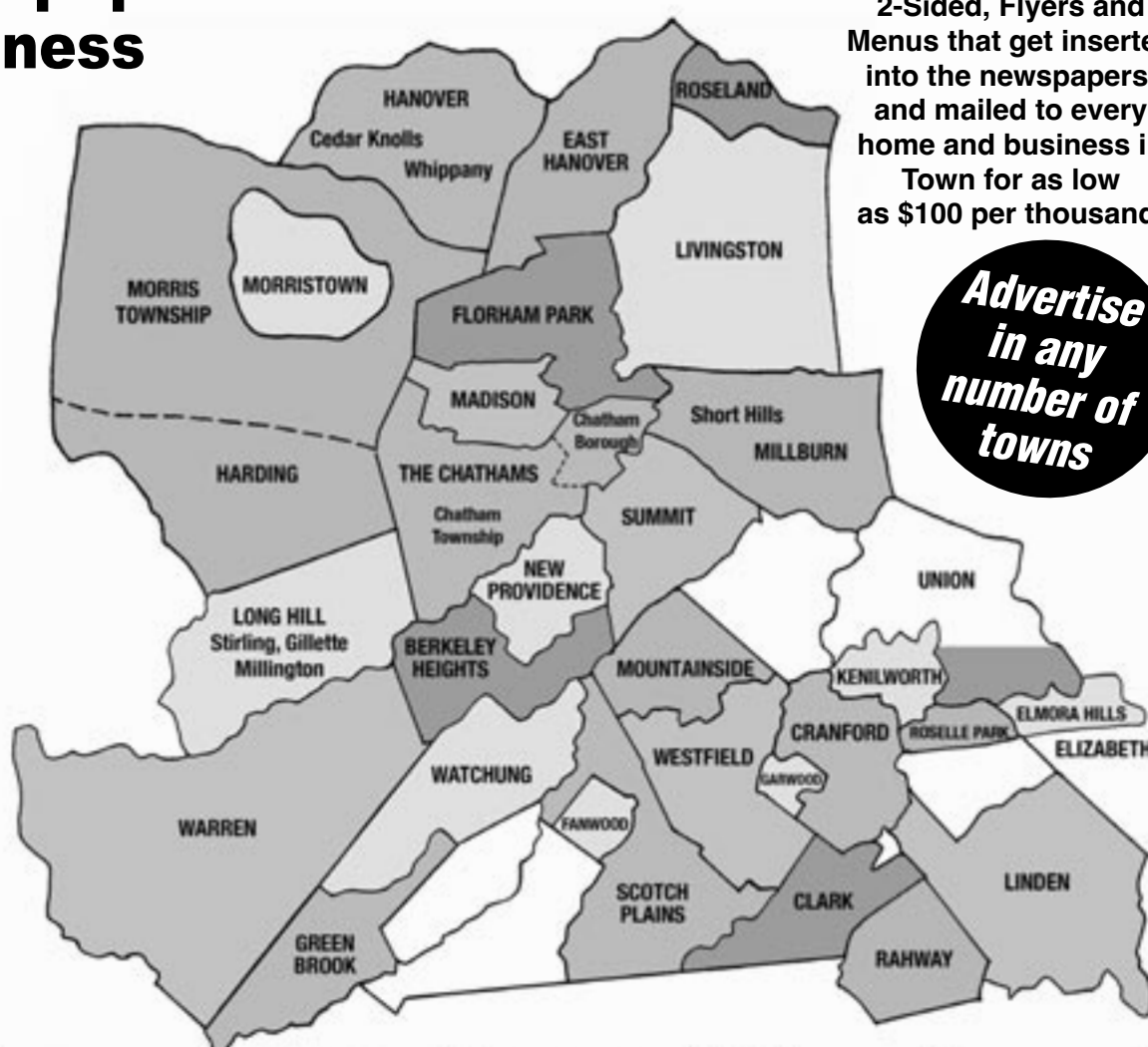
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GALAXIES OF JOY: THE PLANETS IN CONCERT

Wharton Arts' New Jersey Youth Symphony (NJYS) invites audiences to journey across the cosmos at Galaxies of Joy: The Planets in Concert on Saturday, December 13, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. on the UCPAC's Main Stage in Rahway, New Jersey. A Celestial Celebration Featuring Holst's The Planets with NASA Visuals and a World Premiere by NJYS Composer Oliver Kahng.

Led by Artistic Director & Principal Conductor Helen H. Cha-Pyo, this spectacular concert features Gustav Holst's iconic orchestral suite, The Planets, accompanied by stunning, high-definition NASA imagery from the NASA Scientific Visualization Studio (SVS). As the symphony journeys through Mars, Venus, Jupiter, and beyond, vivid visuals drawn from space telescope data and interplanetary missions will illuminate the music's grandeur—transforming the concert hall into a breathtaking voyage through the solar system. (Video credit: NASA's Scientific Visualization Studio, svs.gsfc.nasa.gov/12880.)

Adding to the excitement, the program includes the world premiere of PLUTO: The Gatekeeper to the Underworld by Oliver Kahng,

a senior at Regis High School and a member of the NJYS Youth Symphony. Kahng's original composition offers a contemporary continuation to Holst's planetary suite, inspired by Pluto's mythological and astronomical legacy.

Said Cha-Pyo, "At this magical time of year, there's no better gift to share with family and friends than The Planets, one of the most beloved works in the symphonic repertoire, brought to life with breathtaking NASA visuals and the remarkable artistry of our NJYS Youth Symphony. This concert celebrates the wonder that connects music and imagination, featuring Pluto, a new work by one of our own student composers. I invite you to join us on a truly inspiring journey through sound and creativity.

"Experiencing Holst's The Planets with NASA's stunning visuals creates an unforgettable celestial journey," said Executive Director Gina Caruso. "Premiering a new work by one of our own young composers makes the evening even more special, highlighting the imagination and creativity of our students at the New Jersey Youth Symphony."

Tickets are \$24 for adults and \$19 for students and seniors, available at [UCPAC.org](https://ucpac.org).

Wharton Arts' mission is to offer accessible, high quality performing arts education that sparks personal growth and builds inclusive communities.

Wharton Arts' vision is for a transformative performing arts education in an inclusive community to be accessible for everyone.

Wharton Arts is New Jersey's largest independent non-profit community performing arts education center serving nearly 2,000 students through a range of classes and ensembles. The 5 ensembles of the New Jersey Youth Chorus, an auditioned choral ensemble program for students in grades 3–12, encourage a love and appreciation of choral music while nurturing personal growth and creative development. The 15 ensembles of the New Jersey Youth Symphony, which serve over 500 students in grades 3–12 by audition, inspire young people to achieve musical excellence through high-level ensemble training and performance opportunities. Based in Paterson, the Paterson Music Project is an El Sistema-inspired program of Wharton Arts that uses music education as a vehicle for social action by empowering and inspiring young people to achieve their full potential through the community experience of ensemble learning and playing. From Pathways classes for young children to Lifelong Learning programs for adults, the Wharton Performing Arts School has a robust musical theater and drama program and offers both private and group classes for instruments and voice for all ages and all abilities. With the belief in the positive and unifying influence of music and that performing arts education should be accessible to all people regardless of their ability to pay, Wharton Arts offers need-based scholarships.

Wharton Arts is located in Berkeley Heights, New Providence, and Paterson, NJ and reaches students from 12 counties. All of Wharton Arts' extraordinary teaching artists, faculty members, and conductors hold degrees in their teaching specialty and have been vetted and trained to enable our students to achieve their personal best.



(above) NJYS Youth Symphony, conducted by Helen H. Cha-Pyo, will present Galaxies of Joy: The Planets in Concert will be presented on Saturday, December 13, 2025, at 7:00 p.m., at UCPAC's Main Stage, Rahway, NJ. Tickets available at: [UCPAC.org](https://ucpac.org)



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