



THE
NATIONAL
YOUTH
ORCHESTRA



COLLIDE

The National Youth Orchestra warmly welcomes you – whether you're a musician or a member of the audience, you'll find a part to play in this unique community.

Play your part

Teenagers

Make music a bigger part of your life with free musical opportunities.

Music Educators

From Free for Teens tickets to long-term partnerships, workshops to school takeovers. Together we can help more teenagers play their part in life through music.

Supporters

As a supporter you can play your part in opening the door to orchestral music for thousands of teenagers.

Stay up to date with NYO

Scan the QR code to sign up to our newsletter and receive news and musical surprises from the NYO community.



COLLIDE

Venues

Thursday 9 April, 7.30pm
**The Bridgewater Hall,
Manchester***

Saturday 11 April, 7.30pm
Royal Festival Hall, London



**SOUTHBANK
CENTRE**

Programme

Joe Hisaishi
Symphonic Variation
"Merry-Go-Round +
Cave of Mind" from
Howl's Moving Castle

Wagner
Prelude and Liebestod
from *Tristan und Isolde*

Prokofiev
Romeo and Juliet

Alpesh Chauhan OBE
conductor

*The performance at Bridgewater Hall is recorded for broadcast on BBC Radio 3. Tune in on 1 July at 7.30pm. Also available on BBC Sounds.

The performance will last approximately 2 hrs 15 mins including interval.

Hello and welcome

Hi, I'm Lara. I play the flute and we are The National Youth Orchestra!

Thank you so much for coming this evening. You really are in for something special. It's going to be a rollercoaster of emotions — a beautiful collision of love, courage and conflict.

In many ways, that's not so different from my own musical journey. I've always loved playing the flute, and I've always admired this orchestra.

I remember discovering NYO when I was younger and thinking: "Wow... this orchestra is incredible" — but it felt so out of reach. And yet... here I am.

It was my love for music, and for my flute, that gave me the courage to aim high and keep going — and that's what brought me here tonight.

And I have a feeling there's someone sitting out there, thinking: "This is amazing... but it's not for me." I promise you, it is. There's a place here with your name on it. If you love music, if you're willing to persevere and show up as yourself, we would absolutely love to welcome you. NYO is a community, a family, a place where each person belongs — so come chat to us about how you can be a part of our community.

But for now, sit back, relax and let yourself be swept away as we dive into timeless stories of love, courage and conflict — from the deeply emotional journey through *Howl's Moving Castle*, to the passion of *Tristan und Isolde*, and finally, Prokofiev's intense *Romeo and Juliet*.

We're so glad you're here.

Enjoy — and thank you.

Lara Omidvar
Flute, 17, *Bridgend*



Joe Hisaishi (b.1950)

Symphonic Variation “Merry-Go-Round + Cave of Mind” from *Howl's Moving Castle*

Japanese composer Joe Hisaishi's collaborations with Studio Ghibli and the director Hayao Miyazaki have inspired some of his most famous scores, including music for the 2004 film *Howl's Moving Castle*. Against the backdrop of war, the characters in this animated fantasy go on a journey full of mysterious twists and turns, where the two main characters, Sophie and Howl are thrown together. Sophie is under a spell for much of the film, appearing in the guise of an elderly woman. Her feelings grow for the wizard Howl during the course of the story, but he is unaware of her true identity, until at last the curse is broken.

Hisaishi has arranged the music he composed for *Howl's Moving Castle* music for orchestral performances like this one. The Symphonic Variation “Merry-Go-Round + Cave of Mind” contrasts and combines two of the film's main themes. The waltzing theme, *The Merry-Go-Round of Life*, is heard at the beginning of *Howl's Moving Castle*, and *Cave of Mind* features in the dramatic finale of the film.

Hisaishi's Symphonic Variation based on these two main themes starts with energetic strings and flurries of woodwind, halted by serene chords. Ideas build and overlap, starting with pizzicato (plucked) strings before growing in richness and complexity. Then comes a series of episodes, with contrasting moods and textures — from lyrical tenderness on soft strings, to sparkling, adventurous music played by the full orchestra. Listen out for the noble brass melodies of *Cave of Mind* and the lush piano introduction to *The Merry-Go-Round of Life* — very different ideas that, when they collide, form something magical.



Richard Wagner (1813–1883)

Prelude and Liebestod from *Tristan und Isolde*

Tonight the Orchestra will be playing music from Wagner's opera, *Tristan and Isolde* which was inspired by "the loveliest of dreams". There are lots of parallels in the story of *Tristan und Isolde* and the impossible love in *Romeo and Juliet*. It's no coincidence that it has the kind of enemies-to-lovers storyline seen in countless films and TV shows since.

In this 'music drama', Isolde discovers that Tristan killed her fiancé. She tries to stab him, but he looks into her eyes and she hesitates. Tristan plans that his uncle, the King, should marry Isolde. But she has other ideas and retaliates by trying to poison Tristan. But someone swaps the poison with a love potion and they fall madly in love. Despite his new love for Isolde, Tristan cannot betray the King as she wishes and ends up sacrificing himself. As he dies, Isolde imagines him being reborn as she sings the exquisite 'Liebestod', which literally means 'death of love'.

Wagner's music is lushly romantic, full of intensity and passion. At the time, it also paved the way for some of the

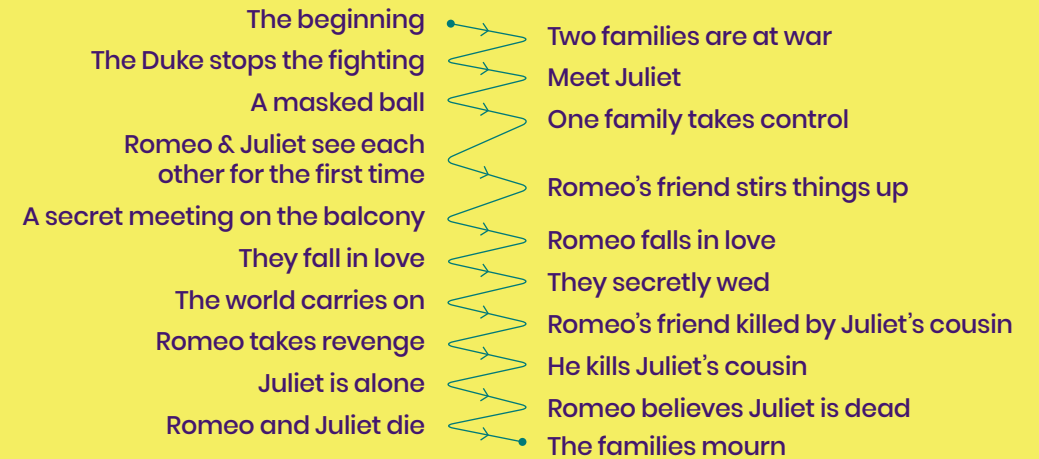
most daring trends of the 20th century. Including, the 'Tristan chord' – a combination of notes which sound like yearning or unrequited love, heard at the start of the Prelude. Listen out for three notes of melody followed by a rich but sharp chord. In the more traditional classical music of the past, a clash of this kind would resolve with a conventional chord, like a musical question followed by an answer. But Wagner broke the rules by leading into another dissonant (clashing) chord: a musical question followed by another question. This new approach to harmony influenced lots of composers, such as Debussy.



Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953)

Romeo and Juliet

The story we're telling....



Based on Shakespeare's tragic play, Prokofiev's ballet vividly tells the story of worlds colliding, when two teenagers fall in love – even though their families are locked in a bitter feud. For this performance, we hear a selection of numbers from the ballet. The contrast between the sincerity of the young lovers and the arrogance of those trying to separate them is audible in Prokofiev's music, building tension through a series of musical mood-swings.

We begin with Prokofiev's distinctive harmony and fluid melodies teeter between poignancy and hope. The first scuffle between the Montagues (Romeo's family) and Capulets (Juliet's clan) presents itself as dramatic percussion and shrill strings. Before the Duke of Verona (where the families live) arrives and declares that any further brawls will be punishable by death, heard through slowly building chords which create a sense of the Duke's power.

We then get to know Juliet, with the music reflecting her playful yet vulnerable youthfulness, as she gets ready for the masquerade ball. The party where she meets her star-crossed lover, Romeo.

We hear the Montagues and Capulets swagger to threatening music and Juliet dancing with a young man, while, in Prokofiev's words, "Romeo watches admiringly". We then meet Romeo's closest ally, Mercutio, who teases Romeo. Prokofiev conjures up his character in exuberant, unpredictable music.

In a secret meeting on Juliet's balcony, the pair admit their love for each other. Romeo and Juliet go on to get married secretly, but any sense of happiness is short-lived. Mercutio is killed by Juliet's cousin, Tybalt. Romeo, devastated by the loss of his friend, takes revenge. We hear this furious revenge in 15 bars of repeated chords, each followed by silence.

Romeo and Juliet are forced to part. We hear Juliet, painfully alone, before reaching the work's tragic ending. Romeo thinks, wrongly, that Juliet is dead, and ends his own life. On discovering that Romeo is dead, she does the same. Despite this tragedy, the music's cautious serenity at the very end leaves us with glimmers of hope that lessons have been learned. That these warring families, instead of persisting with their animosity, will seek peace.

Meet our Principal Conductor and Music Advisor

Alpesh Chauhan OBE

Can you tell us why you're excited to really get stuck into your role at NYO this Spring?

It was a love-at-first-sight moment when I first worked with The National Youth Orchestra — which feels beautifully aligned with the theme of this opening concert in my new role: *Romeo and Juliet*. The energy, commitment and integrity with which these musicians perform is completely infectious. There's a fearlessness and honesty in their music-making that's deeply inspiring. It means we can be ambitious together — pushing further, digging deeper and really exploring the character, drama and true emotion within the music.

Tell us a bit about the role music played in your life when you were a teenager.

Music was everything to me. I'm not entirely sure how it happened — I didn't grow up in a particularly musical family — but once I brought a cello home from school at the age of six, I was obsessed! By my late teens I was completely immersed, playing in four youth orchestras in Birmingham as well as in two string quartets. It shaped my identity, my friendships and my sense of belonging more than any other community that I was a part of: meeting people from different backgrounds, all united by a shared passion. Those formative years weren't just about musical development — they were about connection, discipline, curiosity and joy.

Can you tell us why you picked these movements/sections to tell the story of *Romeo and Juliet*?

I created this particular selection many years ago, and it has since travelled with me around the world. While I had performed the standard orchestral suites when I was younger, I often felt that the story became too fragmented. I wanted to honour the narrative arc properly: to begin at the start and move all the way to the devastating conclusion, allowing the audience to truly experience the unfolding of *Romeo and Juliet*'s love. Its innocence, its exhilaration, its conflict and its tragedy. The first half captures the vibrancy of youth, community and burgeoning love. Gradually, dark tension between the families, the violence and the heartbreak enter, culminating in the final "love deaths" and funeral music. For me, this is Prokofiev's masterpiece — one of the greatest scores ever written. I hope that you feel this journey with us tonight...



Musicians under the spotlight

Elia Karim

Trumpet, 16, *Urmston*

Playing in the Orchestra always motivates me — to overcome challenges, to make new friends. Once you're part of an orchestra, it stays with you forever. I've found it difficult when I haven't been able to play music with others, and playing music with others is the only reason I have kept on with music. You make connections that last a lifetime.

I love to inspire other young people. I want playing an instrument as a young person, to be just as popular as playing sport or being active. It offers you so much. I hope to be supportive of those willing to give music a go and help those that need encouragement.

Aiqi Liu

Viola, 16, *London*

Music has always been part of my life. It's helped me express myself where words fall short. It's inspiring to learn from people my own age, who push me to improve myself as a musician and as a person, while also making genuinely valuable friendships along the way.

Being part of NYO is improving my confidence and helping me become a great communicator. I want to make orchestral music more open and inspiring for audiences, especially young people who may not have experienced it before. I want everyone to experience how meaningful and significant music can be.



Spring Orchestra List

STRINGS

Violin 1

Aki Blendis
Leader
18, *London* †

Eve Ward
Co-Leader
18, *Dartford* †

Seat supported by
David Dutton and
Mave Turner

James Jet Uttley
Co-Leader
17, *Bingley* †

Seat supported by an
anonymous donor

Dora Daisy Bottrill
18, *London*

Seat supported by
Rosemary Cahill and
by Peter and Nina
Hamburger in memory
of violinist Kathleen Malet
(NYO 1949-53)

Tristan Mccardel
18, *Norwich*

Seat supported by
The Barbara Whatmore
Charitable Trust

Lana Jackson
18, *Liverpool*

Seat supported by
Venetia Jennings

Nirvana Che-Lai
15, *London*

Seat supported by
The John Browne Trust

Malcolm Wong
17, *Glasgow*

Seat supported by
The John Browne Trust

Dan Robertson
String Leader
18, *London* †

Ethan Shum
16, *York*

Mason Wang
16, *Wilmslow*

Sasha Branch
16, *St. Albans*

Natalie Fletcher
16, *Prestwood*

Joshua Yin Zhen Tan
15, *Stratford-
Upon-Avon*

Natasha Freedman
String Leader
17, *London* †

Seat supported by
Emma and Phil Geddes

Winston Eugene Lin
16, *London*

Sienna Whiteman
18, *Belfast*

Oliver Michael
15, *Lewisham,
London*

Maria Behrend
14, *Liverpool* *

Lilico Ueno
19, *Woldingham*

Violin 2

Noah Hacking,
Principal
18, *London* †

Seat supported by
Guy Rigby

Hugo Dong
Co-Principal
16, *London* †

Seat supported by
an anonymous donor

Sophie Sze
18, *Sherborne*

Seat supported by an
anonymous donor and
by The Joyce Fletcher
Charitable Trust

Rachel Weston
18, *Peterborough*

Seat supported
by the Guyll-Leng
Charitable Trust

Carla Taeyeon Lee
17, *Walton-
On-Thames*

Seat supported
by Matthew Cain

Rory Zweimueller
15, *New Malden*

Jude Kingston,
String Leader
17, *Carrickfergus* †

Frederick Wilson
17, *Alnwick*

Seat supported by
Michael Twaddle

Samvid Sridhar
14, *Richmond*

Holly Viner
15, *Bicester*

Seat supported in memory
of Aletta du Plessis

Eric Jung-Hoon Park
14, *London*

Phoebe Burgess
15, *York*

Benjamin Giliker
16, *Buxton*

Seat supported by
Michael Weston and by
The Reynolds Foundation

Clarice Ngo
13, *Sutton Coldfield*

Seat supported by
The Harrison-Frank
Family Foundation

Yuan Mi
String Leader
16, *London* †

Alexei Radchuk
14, *London*

James Rippiner
15, *Banchory*

Amelia Yang
13, *Billericay*

Tara Sidhu
15, *Birmingham*

Maria Nikolaeva
18, *Sheffield*

Seat Supported by
John and Margaret
Richards in memory of
Elspeth Gibb Webb and
Josephine Richards

Viola

Rebecca Wells
Principal
17, *Orpington* †

Seat supported by an
anonymous donor and by
Steve and Jackie Street

Jaye Lau
17, *Liverpool*

Joseph Crown
17, *London*

Harry Rughoo
18, *Potters Bar*

Seat supported by
an anonymous donor

Sandy Reilly
15, *Edinburgh*

Evie Cooper
16, *London*

Carine Tsz Ying Ko
16, *York*

Eleanor Hanson
16, *Huddersfield*

Seat supported
by Pat Moore

Thomas Blew
String Leader
18, *Dartford*

Seat supported by
The John Browne Trust

Ellen Heppell
16, *Colchester*

Seat supported by
Julian and Caroline Nettel

Esther Law
19, *Wells*

Aiqi Liu
16, *London*

Rose Trygstad
16, *Huddersfield*

Seat supported
by Rod Mullick

Kendra Wilberforce
16, *St Albans*

Izabela Ward
17, *Coventry*

William Ma
16, *London*

Cello

Charlotte Shlomowitz
Principal
16, *London* †

Seat supported by
Irena and Peter Milloy

Jamie Zweimueller,
Co-Principal
17, *New Malden* †

Seat supported
by Mary Iliff

Dohyeon Ryu
16, *Windsor*

Marharyta Dorosh
18, *Winchester*

Austin Thomas
16, *Manchester*

Seat supported by an
anonymous donor

Emily Elliott
String Leader
16, *Islington*

Anna Wilson
16, *London*

Seat supported in
memory of Paul Morgan

Hayden You
15, *Cambridge*

Seat supported by
June Newman

Laurie Hawtin
17, *Great Bedwyn,
Marlborough*

Louis Delstanche,
String Leader
18, *Whitley Bay*

Seat supported by
Karen and Kim Papworth

Oliver Pearce
16, *Old Colwyn*

Seat supported by
The Colwinston
Charitable Trust

Anabelle Redmond
15, *London*

Kalli Ziegler
17, *London*

Seat supported by
Ian and Helen Hart

Ruwan Dias
15, *Radlett*

Patrick Fourie
16, *Pollak*

Seat supported by
Margaret Wheatley

Kiera Morgan
16, *Abergavenny*

Seat supported by
The Colwinston
Charitable Trust

Susannah Wells
15, *Petts Wood* *

Ana Benito De Valle
17, *Lincoln*

Seat supported by
Amaryllis Roper

Double Bass

Callum Campbell
Principal
16, *Glasgow* †

Seat supported by
Drs Charles and
Jacqueline Ross in
memory of Alex Ross

Eduard Marcu
Co-Principal
18, *London* †

Rohan Malhotra
15, *London*

**Prince Malachi
David Nwoke**
18, *Ealing*

Seat supported by
Anthony Albert and
by the Guyll-Leng
Charitable Trust

Lucas Tao
14, *London*

Kevin Lee
17, *Thatcham*

Seat supported by
Ms Wyn Hart in memory
of Gerald Brinnen

Isla Macfadyen
String Leader
17, *Aberdeen*

Seat supported by
Euan Sutherland

Hannah Rasic
15, *East Barnet* *

Jessica Ling
16, *Leatherhead*

Conor Crown
17, *London* *

Millie Curtin
19, *Great Chesterford*

Seat supported by
Drs Charles and
Jacqueline Ross in
memory of Alex Ross

Anselm King
18, *London*

Seat supported by
Simon Carrington
and Alastair Hume

Spring Orchestra List

WOODWIND

Flute

Emme Hensel
Joint principal
17, *West Wellow Romsey* †

Seat supported in memory of Ian Senior

Hanhan Qu
Joint principal
16, *Guildford* †

Hannah Atkinson
18, *Whitley Bay*

Seat supported by Patricia Robertson-Glasgow

Kaya De Sousa
19, *Brighton*

Seat supported by an anonymous donor

Alyssa Ilchenko
15, *London*

Seat supported by an anonymous donor

Zuzanna Kujawa
17, *Glasgow*

Seat supported by the Guyll-Leng Charitable Trust

Lara Omidvar
17, *Bridgend*

Seat supported by The Colwinston Charitable Trust

Oboe

Alasdair Cottee
Principal
18, *Dunbar* †

Natalie Denley
17, *London*

Bob Hind
19, *Sheffield*

Vinchy Ho
18, *Manchester*

Seat supported by the Allam sisters

Nathan Ikechukwu Daniel
16, *Purley*

Hannah Maugham
17, *London*

Seat supported by The John Browne Trust

Leah Wiseman
17, *London*

Seat supported by Tim Rollit Mason and Vanessa Blackmore, by Howarth of London, and by The Valentine Charity

Clarinet

Yeung Lok Hang Jasper
Principal
19, *Wells* †

Seat supported by an anonymous donor

Easher Austin
15, *Loughborough* *

Evan Badcock
17, *Bishops Stortford*

Seat supported by Richard Leaver and by Professor Alastair Watson

Hazel Cheung
16, *Shrewsbury*

Seat supported by The Reynolds Foundation

Maxim Eaton
18, *Derby*

Seat supported by Mrs. Noelle Mendelssohn

Clarice Leung
18, *Nottingham*

Seat supported by Stephen Goldring and by Sheila Walton

Nina Linn
17, *Rochester*

Seat supported by Faith Guthrie

Tenor Saxophone

Josephine Hosking
18, *Launceston* *

Charlie Lambert
19, *New Mills* *

Bassoon

Nahuel Angius-Thomas
Principal 17, *London* †

Seat supported by the Guyll-Leng Charitable Trust

Felix Elliott
16, *Biddenden*

Lilly Goodbrand
17, *Cambridge* *

Helen Howarth
18, *Sale*

Seat supported by an anonymous donor

Leo Jemison
18, *Purley*

Seat Supported by Michael Waldman

Katie Messenger
16, *Beverley*

Seat Supported by Judith Line

Katerina Vidouris
18, *Guildford*

BRASS

Horn

Emma Sandford
Principal
17, *London* †

Jacob Adams
Co-principal
18, *Penarth* †

Seat supported by The Colwinston Charitable Trust

Lucy Arbuckle
17, *Glasgow*

Seat supported by Michael Hopkins and by an anonymous donor

Zoë Battiwalla
18, *Bristol* *

Polly Bishop
18, *Harpenden*

Magnus Campbell
14, *Glasgow*

Melissa Hawkings
18, *Norwich*

Seat supported by Nigel Beale

Rhona Langford
18, *Glasgow*

Seat supported by Brian Turnbull

Leo Maskell
15, *Liverpool* *

Guy Sidney
18, *Bristol* *

Hugh Suggett
17, *Beaconsfield* *

Joey Walker
7, *Staines*

Seat supported by Roger Vidler

Trumpet

Christopher Gibson
Principal
19, *Rugby* †

Seat supported by Ursula Jones

Matthew Burlingham
17, *Berkhamsted* *

Elia Karim
16, *Urmston*

Seat supported by Paul and Emma O'Hea

Nerys Meeran
17, *London*

Seat supported by Derek Mason

Louis Millar
16, *Nottingham*

Seat supported by an anonymous donor

Anna Ross-Bell
17, *London*

Seat supported by The Marsden Family and by The Valentine Charity

Ralf Sauer
16, *London*

Leo Stemp
18, *Bacup*

Seat supported by The Ayudar Foundation

Trombone

Jack Traynor,
Principal
17, *Hamilton* †

Seat supported by the Rock Solid Trust

Llion Dafydd Barker
16, *Pwllglas*

Seat supported by Paul Allam and by The Colwinston Charitable Trust

Toby Calvert
17, *South Cave*

Seat supported by Juliet Maxey in memory of Robert Maxey

William Evans
17, *Upchurch*

Will Foster
17, *Bromley*

Michael Dickinson
16, *Ballymena*

Haris Jacobs
17, *Liverpool*

Seat supported by the Rock Solid Trust

Rory Winn
16, *Sale*

Seat supported by Nigel Long

Tuba

Edward Falloon,
Principal
18, *Caerphilly* †

Seat supported by The Colwinston Charitable Trust

Yevindra Meedeniya Jayasekera
15, *Highgate*

Seat supported by Jonathan and Elizabeth Clowes

Daniel Pryce
16, *London*

Seat supported by Anthony Albert

PERCUSSION

Percussion

Emily Hathaway
Joint principal
18, *Kilmacolm* †

Henry Jones
Joint principal
17, *Edinburgh* †

Sam Goldman
16, *London* *

Ellis Hollows
18, *St Annes On The Sea*

Seat supported by Catherine Turner

Oscar Lond
16, *Sleaford*

Seat supported by John and Diana de la Cour in memory of Betty Ashcroft

Andrew Morris
16, *Macclesfield*

Seat supported by The Bluefields Trust

Lily Phanos
19, *Edinburgh*

KEYS & HARPS

Keyboard

Jerry Liu
15, *Epsom*

Adi Srivastava
16, *Sevenoaks*

Harp

Olivia Clark,
Principal
17, *Reading* †

Sunny Chan
16, *Royston*

Millie Huang
14, *Sale* *

Claire Wynne Lloyd
15, *Gwenlli* *

Age as of 11 April 2026

* Spring Guest

† Leverhulme Arts Scholar.
Seat kindly supported by The Leverhulme Trust.



There's a part for you to play

As the timeless stories of tonight's performance unfold on stage, you are experiencing more than just the joy of the music you love. You are experiencing a culmination of the hard-work, determination and courage that every musician on stage has put into reaching new heights in their music making.

Tonight is a special night for these musicians. But being a musician in the Orchestra is a year-long commitment that goes way beyond the stage. It's about being a changemaker for their generation, taking the power of orchestral music directly to teenagers across the country. Inspiring thousands in locations where music education is declining - or even absent.

Together, they unite in playing music together, and find it gives them a community in which their creativity can flourish. As they rise to challenges together and share their musical passion with each other, they build confidence, skills for life and friendships that can last a lifetime. But too many young people are locked out of this opportunity, because of where they live or family finances.

A donation to NYO today will help these teenagers access free musical opportunities. You can help ensure that young musicians in the UK have the chance to experience the joy of playing orchestral music with others, and have the opportunity to experience all that sharing music with others can give them.

To donate or find out more please visit nyo.org.uk/support-us or call the Fundraising team on 0300 304 5255.



“The standard is higher than anywhere else I've been. The attitude and the atmosphere. You can tell everyone wants to be here. And there is this shared passion and excitement for the music you are playing.”

Bob, Oboe



The National Youth Orchestra
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London WC1V 7JU

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nyo.org.uk



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The National Youth Orchestra would like to thank all the individuals, legacy donations, trusts, foundations and companies whose generosity and foresight enable us to do what we do.