THE NATIONAL YOUTH ORCHESTRA Play Your Part



4 January – Barbican, London 5 January – Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham 6 January – Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Free for Teens

Welcome to NYO Ascent

As this year's leader of the Orchestra, I am thrilled to welcome you to our first concert tour of the year. During this residency, we've explored some incredible repertoire under the expert guidance of Sir Mark Elder. Working closely with such an inspirational conductor alongside the outstanding NYO's instrumental tutors has made creating music at such a high level a truly unique and unforgettable experience.

The National Youth Orchestra is a widespread community that not only consists of the musicians you see on stage tonight, but includes thousands of other young people across the country who have been involved in many diverse activities that NYO organises nationwide.

In the spirit of 'Ascent', I believe that learning an instrument is not only a musical journey but a metaphorical climb. Just as tonight's concert theme reflects the ascent of landscapes, we see the journey of learning music as a means for young people to ascend over personal hurdles, providing us all with a source of resilience and accomplishment.

The Orchestra itself is made up of over 150 musicians and stands as a collective of role models, fuelling inspiration and spreading passion for music.

Tonight's repertoire features two pieces portraying soaring European landscapes and a new commission highlighting the theme of Ascent. Richard Strauss' Alpine Symphony quides listeners through the picturesque scenes of the Bavarian Alps, while Smetana's VItava paints a vivid picture of the Moldau River with flowing melodies and Czech-inspired themes. In contrast, Dani Howard's Ascent, a new composition for brass and percussion, captures the dynamisim of our journey, both as musicians and young people.

This performance marks not just an evening of musical 'Ascent' but also the start of an exciting new year for The National Youth Orchestra. I would like to thank you for coming to enjoy this concert and for supporting live classical music. We look forward to sharing this performance with you tonight.



Rose Gosney Violin, 17, Southampton



Thursday 4 January, 7pm Barbican, London

Friday 5 January, 7pm Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham

Saturday 6 January, 7.30pm Warwick Arts Centre Sir Mark Elder, Conductor

Dani Howard

Ascent (World Premiere Tour)

Bedřich Smetana
Vltava (The Moldau)

Richard Strauss

Eine Alpensinfonie, Op. 64

(Alpine Symphony)

The performance will last approximately 85 minutes, with no interval.

Please note there has been a change to the programme from previously advertised.



We first met Dani Howard during the covid-19 pandemic when our mission was to keep connecting to young people and inspire them to stay passionate about music despite the barriers they were facing. Dani was at the forefront of helping us develop creative music making skills for young people during that challenging time - a musical ambition that continues long after the pandemic.

Dani's first piece for The National Youth Orchestra was *Jigsaw*, not just any orchestral piece, this was an amazing work that was able to be performed online by over 800 young people from across the whole country. Dani's commitment to young people was central to the success of both the piece, the project and to those young people staying connected to their music making and you can see the outcome of that work on our YouTube channel.

Ascent is written as a companion piece for Strauss's Alpine Symphony and features the brass and percussion of the Orchestra along with the offstage brass that help bring life to the work. The title reflects not just the epic journey we hear in the Strauss but also the act of standing up as young musicians, to be seen and heard as our young people should, to have their voices become a bigger part of our world.

As an internationally celebrated composer, Dani is writing music for a wide range of artists and orchestras – in June 2021 she received the premiere of her award-winning Trombone Concerto written for NYO alumni Peter Moore. This season she is writing a new Saxophone Concerto for Jess Gillam and will also premiere a new Percussion Concerto for Dame Evelyn Glennie and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales.

We're honoured to work with Dani once again, perform her music and share her passion for creating new music and new ideas.

Craig West Programmes Director

To read Dani's programme note for her piece, *Ascent*, head to our website.

Bedrich Smetana (1824 – 1884)

Má Vlast: Vltava

(My Country: The Moldau), 1874

By the time the Czech composer Smetana had finished his most famous achievement, Mà Vlast ('My Country'), he had lost his hearing. Despite being haunted by whistling noises inside his head, Smetana persevered to produce six glittering symphonic poems: a heroic triumph over adversity. Each of the symphonic poems – single-movement orchestral works that describe a story or place – reflects the composer's love of his homeland, capturing some aspect of its mythology, history or scenery.

Smetana studied in Prague, where his passionate interest in politics grew, and in 1848 he took part in a revolt (which was unsuccessful) against the Austrian rulers who dominated his country. He later became conductor of the Czech Provisional Theatre, but his worsening hearing meant that he had to give up the role in 1874. Yet it did not stop Smetana from writing some of his best-loved and finest music, including Mà Vlast.

The most famous of the six symphonic poems of Mà Vlast is the second, Vltava, which takes us on a journey along the course of the river Moldau.

A fluid, twisting line is passed between two flutes, which represent a pair of babbling brooks, one warm, one cool. They join a stream and flow through the beautiful Czech landscape of forests and meadows.

The main theme is probably Smetana's most memorable creation, and the piece also includes a cheerful folk dance that conjures up a peasant wedding, as well as a gentle melody on strings that depicts water nymphs dancing by moonlight. The stirring main theme returns in all its majesty as Vltava passes through Prague, onwards past the fort of Vysehrad, before being united with the river Elbe at the Bohemian town of Mělník.

Programme note by Joanna Wyld.

Richard Strauss (1964 - 1949)

Eine Alpensinfonie Op.64

(Alpine Symphony), 1915

Nacht (Night)

Sonnenaufgang (Sunrise)

Der Anstieg (The Ascent)

Eintritt in den Wald

(Entry into the Forest)

Wanderung neben dem Bache (Wandering by the Brook)

Am Wasserfall (At the Waterfall)

Erscheinung (Apparition)

Auf blumigen Wiesen

(On Flowering Meadows)

Auf der Alm (On the Alpine Pasture)

Durch Dickicht und Gestrüpp auf

Irrwegen (Through Thickets and Undergrowth on the Wrong Path)

Auf dem Gletscher (On the Glacier)

Gefahrvolle Augenblicke

(Dangerous Moments)

Auf dem Gipfel (On the Summit)

Vision (Vision)

Nebel steigen auf (Mists Rise)

Die Sonne verdüstert sich allmählich

(The Sun Gradually Becomes Obscured)

Elegie (Elegy)

Stille vor dem Sturm

(Calm Before the Storm)

Gewitter und Sturm, Abstieg (Thunder and Tempest, Descent)

Sonnenuntergang (Sunset)

Ausklang (Quiet Settles)

Nacht (Night)

The scale of Strauss' Alpine Symphony is enormous, calling for an orchestra of over 140 players including eight horns, 12 offstage horns and an expanded woodwind section. Strauss started composing the piece in 1911 while settling into his new villa in the town of Garmisch, behind which rises the glorious spectacle of the Alps. As well as taking us on a vivid journey into this grand, mountainous terrain, Strauss wanted to write music of real depth. In fact, he initially imagined the Alpine Symphony as an exploration of new philosophical ideas - but in the end he rejected this plan in favour of a celebration of nature.

Strauss had happy memories of the Alps dating back to his childhood. When his father, the horn player Franz, joined the Bayreuth orchestra in 1876, the Strauss family took the opportunity to go on holiday in the Italian Alps. Two years later, Strauss became trapped on a mountain during a storm, and when he eventually got home again he 'described the whole hike on the piano', creating 'huge paintings' of sound. His love of nature was lifelong, as his sister, Johanna, wrote: 'He had a great love for everything, mountains and forests, meadows and flowers, for all animals'.

Strauss finished orchestrating the *Alpine Symphony* on 8 February 1915, and dedicated the work 'in profound gratitude' to Count Seebach, director of the Dresden Royal Opera House,

where several of his operas had been performed. The symphony premiered on 28 October in Berlin by the Dresden Court Orchestra, conducted by Strauss himself. At the final rehearsal he declared: 'At last I have learned to orchestrate. I wanted to compose, for once, as a cow gives milk.' His critics seized on this rather comical phrase as a chance to mock Strauss, and some of them dismissed the work as 'cinema music' (thought to be less serious and significant than music written for the concert hall). Others praised the Alpine Symphony, enjoying its 'long and gorgeous weft of sound."

Strauss' Alpine Symphony depicts 24 hours in the mountains through a series of scenes. Each scene creates a powerful sense of atmosphere and place: listen out for cowbells, wind and thunder machines, organ, and celesta (a tinkling percussion instrument that looks like a small piano).

There is a particularly striking effect at the beginning and end of the whole work, involving a descending series of sustained notes that grows until every degree of the scale is heard at the same time.

Although Strauss stayed in Garmisch for over three decades, it seems this ambitious account of the Alps was all he needed to say on the subject. Apart from quoting the Alpine Symphony in a couple of songs, he never again attempted such as specific tribute to the spectacular beauty of his surroundings.



Sir Mark ElderMeet the conductor

What do you love about being a conductor?

When I was in my teens, I played the bassoon, I played the piano, I sang, and I acted a lot. After some years, it seemed to me that to be a conductor was a way to bring all these things together. And from that, I threw myself into opera, which is a wonderful training ground for a very young conductor. My musical life since then has always been a mixture of concerts and operas, and the variety that comes from that is the thing I love most about my work.

What are you looking forward to about working with NYO?

The chance to introduce to so many teenagers the power and beauty of the Alpine Symphony, an enormous work by Richard Strauss. I look forward to sensing the audience and orchestra's involvement in a work that explores such a scale of imagination and emotion.

What was your most inspiring moment as a teenage musician?

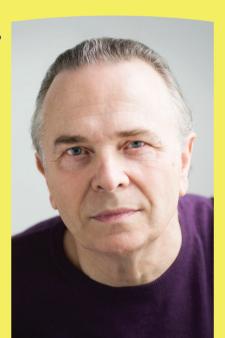
In my time in NYO, we went on tour to Israel. It was unbelievably hot, I remember. On the way home, we stopped to play a concert in the old Roman amphitheatre underneath the acropolis in Athens. I shall never forget playing for that public. It was a huge audience, and the sound of the applause was like a great wave coming towards us. We played Benjamin Britten's the Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, and the applause started while we were still playing the last chord. At the

same time, the acropolis, which we could just see above us (the audience couldn't see it, but we could) was lit it up in different colours. It was very thrilling and quite unlike any other experience I'd had up until that time.

What is your advice for today's teenage musicians?

When we are teenagers, we don't necessarily know what we are destined to be. Not everybody will become a professional musician but music can play a very potent part in our lives without it being how we earn our money. Music will always need fighting for, championing, and there will always be audiences to listen. In my view, we all have a responsibility to help other people feel the power of music and enjoy what it has to offer.

Find out more about Sir Mark Elder at www.grovesartists.com/ artist/sir-mark-elder/





Daniel Fergie

Oboe, 17, Stockton-on-Tees

I first started playing the clarinet at the age of 9, after being inspired by a lady from my local music service coming into my school. I then started the oboe two years later as I had attended some concerts and was drawn to its sound. Initially, I wasn't very enthusiastic about playing the oboe as I found it too frustrating. However, thanks to my teacher's support, it began to get easier!

The oboe has such an expressive sound, and I love getting the chance to play beautiful melodies and sing out over the rest of the orchestra. Despite being such a difficult instrument to play, it is so rewarding to overcome challenges - and composers reward your patience by writing some of the most gorgeous solo lines for the oboe. I hope that as a member of the Orchestra, I can act as a positive role model for other musicians, and I look forward to working with other oboists across the country as part of NYO Inspire.



Khyati Mohan Baba

Harp, 16, Enfield

I am so excited to take part in all the different opportunities at The National Youth Orchestra. It hasn't been that easy for me to connect or make music with other harpists or musicians, particularly as I'm not at a Junior Conservatoire, and at my school there are limited opportunities for playing my harp in ensembles.

Over the last two years, I've taken part in NYO Inspire and participated in numerous NYO projects and residencies, developing many skills. This is my first year as an Orchestra musician and I hope that by being a part of NYO I will be able to show other young people that orchestral music is for everybody and there is always a way for anyone to get involved, no matter what your background is or how much experience you have.





VIOLIN 1

Rose Gosney
Leader 17,
Southampton †*
Seat supported by David

Dutton and Maye Turner.

Tara Spencer
Co-Leader 18,
Reading †
Seat supported in memory
of Aletta du Plessis.

Vivek Ramanan 18, Buckinghamshire

Jenny Wells16, Orpington
Seat supported by an anonymous donor.

Antonia Zadrag 18, London

Aki Blendis
16, London †
Seat supported by Isabella
Fulford (NYO 2016 - 2017).

India Reilly 17, Edinburgh

Teagan Craggs 16, Wells

Alice Younger String-Leader 18, St. Leonards-On-Sea †

Seat supported by Guy Rigby.

Finn Kjaergaard
16, London
Seat supported by John
and Pauline Tremlett.

Lily An 17, Thirsk

Joe Netley
17, Canterbury
Seat supported by
Michael Twaddle.

Richard Eichhorst 16, London

Sakura Fish 19, Bishop's Stortford

Mark Leung
18, Redhill
Seat supported by
Matthew Cain.

Charlotte Slater String-Leader, 18, Ellon † Seat supported by Anthony Albert.

Sebastian Watt 15, London

Eve Ward 16, Dartford Joseph Ryan
16, Guildford
Seat supported by
Catharina Van der Vorm.

Justin Chan Chun Ting 17, Manchester

VIOLIN 2

Peter Ryan Principal 16, Dublin †*

Amber Sun Co-Principal 18, London †

Zachary Bacon Darwin 17. London

Charlotte Sanderson

Richards.

18, London Seat supported by John and Margaret Richards in memory of Elspeth Gibb Webb and Josephine

Anne-Mei Ong 16, Stanmore

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

Joe Stoller 17, Guernsey **Yunus Eshekh- Alonso**16. Bexhill-On-Sea

Sam Cole 16, Guernsey

Isabella Grant String-Leader 17, Harpenden † Seat supported by an anonymous donor.

Chenyi Lele Zhang 15, Brentford

Dora Daisy Bottrill 16, London Seat supported by Rosemary Cahill.

Noah Hacking 16, London

Luisa Krausova 17, Cambridge

Felicity Lee 14, Edgware

William Guo 15, Glasgow

Libi Winterstein15, London
Seat supported by Venetia Jennings

Ella Hodgson-Laws String-Leader, 17, York †

Joshua Yin Zhen Tan

13, Stratford-Upon-Avon

James Jet Uttley, 14, Bingley

Madeleine Jones 16, Diss

VIOLA

Danya Jayasinghe Rushton Principal 18, Barnet †*

Sassan Bhanji Co-Principal 18,

London † Clio Proffitt

17, London Seat supported by Julian and Caroline Nettel.

Joseph May 18, Reading

Rebecca O'Shea

17, Bath

Seat supported by The Joyce Fletcher Charitable Trust, and by Rod Mullick.

Shivani Jansari

16, Lincoln

Tifany Rodas

String-Leader 18, London †

Jessica Elliott

16, London

Libby Broomhead

17, Blackburn

Rebecca Wells 15, Orpington

Seat supported by an anonymous donor.

Theadora Griffiths

18, Coventry

Annabel Cullington-Doss 16, Southampton

Aiden Macdonald String-Leader 17,

String-Leader 1/, Glasgow

Lydia Atkinson 17, Whitley Bay

Seat supported by an anonymous donor.

Hannah Killick

17, Bristol

Hugo Jopling 16. London

Hannah Tsui 14. London

Carlotta Vitaloni

17, London

CELLO

Andrew O'Reilly Principal 17,

Principal 17, Kenilworth † Seat supported by T

Seat supported by The Reynolds Foundation, and by Paul and Eunice Morgan.

Ella Harrison

Co-Principal 17, Harpenden †
Seat supported by The

Reynolds Foundation.

Gabriel Ward 17, London

Seat supported by Karen and Kim Papworth.

Dohyeon Ryu

14, Windsor

Sebastian Loerstad

15, Stockholm ‡

Ben Matson

String-Leader 17, Stockport †*

Michael Francis 17. Bromlev

Seat supported by Mark Ford and Stephen Metcalfe.

Lewis Tang

16, Manchester ‡

Jamie Zweimueller

String-Leader 15, New Malden †

Seat supported by Mary Iliff.

Eliza Casbolt

17, London

Kit Cookson 17, Ystradowen

Aglaïa Carvalho-Dubost

15, Haywards Heath

Seat supported by Irena and Peter Milloy.

Oscar Wang

16, London

Charlotte Shlomowitz,

14, London ‡

Wallace Chan

16, Abingdon

Kalli Ziegler 15, London

Seat supported by lan and Helen Hart.

Chloe Dong

17, London

Han Cho

16, Surrey

DOUBLE BASS

Emily ChambersJoint-Principal 17, Chipping Norton

Seat supported by Ms Wyn Hart in memory of Gerald Brinnen.

Laurence Flower 18, London †

Seat supported by David Richardson and Janet Hilton.

Brooke Simpson

Joint-Principal 17, Bromley †

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

Merritt Factor

16, London

Elliot Cundy

16, Guildford

Holly Reinhardt 16, Oxford

William James

String-Leader 16, Esher †

Louis Richardson

17, London

Callum Campbell

14, Glasgow

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

Ellen Goodyer

16, Chesham

Seat supported by Simon Carrington and Alastair Hume.

WOODWIND

FLUTE

Lily Owens Principal 16, Calne †*

Seat supported by Graham Carter.

Lucy Barrett 18. Sandv

Kiera Exall

17, Raunds
Seat supported by
Susan Morcombe.

Erika Khederian 17. London

Hanhan Qu 14, Guildford

Seat supported by Andrew Tusa.

Isaac Skey 16, Haywards Heath

Josie Annikki Wakefield

17, Sutton

Lauren Booth 18. Elv+

OBOE

Daniel FergieJoint-Principal

17, Stockton-On-Tees †

Seat supported by Emma and Phil Geddes.

Rhea Jo

Joint-Principal 17, Worcester Park †*

Alasdair Cottee 16. Dunbar

Cara Garrow

16, Oxford

Seat supported by the Allam sisters.

Esther Kallow 16. Larbert

Guadalupe Lowe 16. Carshalton

Myfanwy Meeran 17. London

Esme Savage

18. York+

CLARINET

Lucas Dick

Principal 18, Esher †*

Ruxi Deng

18, Glasgow Seat supported by Faith Guthrie.

Clarice Leung
16, Nottingham
Seat supported by

Stephen Goldring.

Nina Linn

15, Rochester

Alicia Li-Yan-Hui 16, Cambridge

Thomas McDonnell

16, Hertford

Seat supported by Professor Alastair Watson.

Gemma Winfield

17, Solihull

Tommaso Vigliocco 17. London+ **BASSOON**

Marcel Carlos Cress

Principal 16, Northwich †

Seat supported by Jonathan and Elizabeth Clowes.

Megan Belshaw 17, Reading

Seat supported by Michael Waldman.

Max Docherty 16, Glasgow

Harriet Hillier

17, London
Seat supported by
Judith Line.

Smera Sachin 16. Cambridae

Kwasi Sefa-Attakora

17, Manchester

Katerina Vidouris 15, Guildford

Nahuel Angius-Thomas 15. London+

BRASS

HORN

Claire Marsden

Joint-Principal 17, York † Seat supported by

Brian Turnbull.

Georgia Paxton
Joint-Principal 16,
Altrincham †

Seat supported by Michael Hopkins.

Jacob Adams

16, Penarth

Polly Bishop 15. Harpenden

Noah Hall 18, Kingston Upon Thames

Seat supported by Paul Allam.

Katie Parker

17, Inverness

Seat supported by Robert and Juliet Maxey, in memory of Ken and Olive Maxey.

Xander Quinney

16, Oxford

Seat supported by Nigel Beale.

Emma Sandford

15, Bromley ‡

Conrad Thorndike

16, Pontyclun

Robyn Rose Verney-Kershaw

17, Chesham

TRUMPET

Eleanor McKenzie-Jones

Principal 16, Tonbridge † Seat supported by Dr Ursula Jones.

Cole Craggs 13, Wells

Ore Fashesin-Souza

17, Brentwood

Christopher Gibson

16, Rugby

Edward Hinchliff 18. Farnham

Seat supported by the HR Taylor Charitable Trust.

Nayan Shah 14. Pinner

Elias Simojoki

17, Fareham Seat supported by Nigel Long.

Anton Ting

16, Manchester

Carys Wood 16, Saundersfoot

TROMBONE

Anna BaileyJoint-Principal 17,

Cambridge †
Seat supported by the Rock Solid Trust.

Ned Pettitt

Joint-Principal 17, Ipswich †

Seat supported by The Barbara Whatmore Charitable Trust.

Nye Bayley

14, Winchester

Morgan Bland

15, MarkfieldSeat supported by the Rock Solid Trust.

George Hughes 17, Colwyn Bay

Chloe Simpson

16, Epsom

Dewi Thistlewood18. Cardiff

Brandon Wong 16, London

Arthur Easey 18, London+

— TUBA

Isaac Giaever-Enger

Principal 16, Newbury †*

Ini Kuti

17, Stockport Seat Supported by Anthony Albert.

Tristan McCardel

15, Norwich

PERCUSSION

PERCUSSION

Joshua Gearing Joint-Principal 18,

Hatfield †*

Seat supported by Steve and Jackie Street.

Elinor Mason

Joint-Principal 17, Macclesfield †

Shesh Abu-Jabir

17, Ipswich
Seat supported by John
and Diana de la Cour in
memory of Betty Ashcroft.

Robert Carr

17. York

Wilamena Dyer

17, Falmouth
Seat supported by Pat
Moore.

William Ewins

16, Edinburgh

Lucas Faram 15. Bristol

Charlie Shortt 16, Craigavon

KEYS

HARP

Defne Anar

Principal 17, Bristol †*

Erin Fflur Jardine 15. Cardiff

Khyati Mohan Baba

16, Enfield

Kylia Tsz Yam Pai

14, Nottingham

- KEYBOARD

Alexander Kwon

Principal 17, Edinburgh

Nina Papastathi

17, Winchester

OFF STAGE

BRASS

HORN

George Brady

15, Lauder+

Arthur Conyers

16, Bristol+

Chloe Harrison

NYO 2023 alumni

Melissa Hawkings 15. Norwich+

Daniel Hibbert NYO 2023 alumni

Thomas King 16. Tunbridae

16, Tunbridge Wells+

Joey Walker

15, Staines-upon-Thames+

Henry Ward NYO 2022 alumni

TROMBONE

Ben Haslam

Tobias Calvert

15, South Cave+

NYO 2023 alumni

* Blavatnik Scholars. Seat kindly supported by the Blavatnik Family Foundation.

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

‡ Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Scholar. Seat kindly supported by The Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust.

+ Winter Residency Guest



Play Your Part

Open the door to music for more teenagers

The National Youth Orchestra is the UK's leading organisation championing orchestra music as a powerful agent for teenage development.

We provide a wide range of musical opportunities for teenagers, welcoming them into the NYO community. Whether they are at a high level of instrumental playing, are at an early stage of learning, or have never played an instrument but simply need a chance to experience how live orchestral music makes them feel - especially when it's performed by their peers: there's a part for them to play at NYO.

We are absolutely committed to providing our activities for free, to ensure that teenagers face no barriers to accessing these, regardless of their backgrounds or where they live.

Teenagers nationwide need access to the opportunities we offer. Profound communal, creative activities that can build young people's confidence, skills for life and gives them unforgettably joyful experiences.

Despite the valiant efforts of many in the sector, UK music education is experiencing systemic failures and facing catastrophic decline; both in the classroom and in opportunities to learn instruments.

Currently, each year our activities directly involve 2,000 teenage musicians and over 8,000 teenagers in the audience – who benefit from access to Free for Teens tickets.

With 86% of our funding coming from donations, none of this work could be done without our generous supporters and we are incredibly grateful to them.

Together we can open the door to orchestral music for many more teenagers. We can give them lifechanging opportunities. By giving those with a passion for orchestral music the chance to perform with others and raise their own playing to a new level. By enabling young musicians to go out to their local communities and be role models for others. By encouraging young people to set off on a musical journey.

If you would like to donate today, to give even more young people the gift of participating in the electrifying experiences that orchestral music can offer, please visit **nyo.org.uk**



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