

# Nota Bene

Welcome to NYO Canada's Biannual Newsletter! • **Bienvenue au bulletin biannuel de NYO Canada!**  
Celebrating Canada's finest emerging artists • **Met en scène le meilleur de notre relève artistique**

## IN THIS ISSUE...



INTRODUCING  
NAOMI WOO



2024 EMERGING  
COMPOSER



REMEMBERING  
GREG IRVINE



MICHAEL MEASURES  
PRIZE WINNERS



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



ADVANCING HEALTH  
AND WELLNESS



## HORIZONS TOUR

A JOURNEY THROUGH CANADA'S WEST

As we turn our gaze toward the peaks and plains of Western Canada, the National Youth Orchestra of Canada (NYO Canada) prepares for its highly-anticipated Horizons Tour. Under the baton of conductor Naomi Woo, this summer promises to be an unforgettable journey for musicians and audiences alike through the diverse landscapes that span the breadth of Canada.

In early June, students will gather at the beautiful Isabel Bader Centre at Queen's University to hone their skills and artistry during a rigorous five-week training session. Students have much to look forward to in what will be an invaluable and unforgettable summer:



- **The return of the acclaimed Chamberfest:** Featuring diverse composers, styles, and ensembles, this 12-concert chamber music series provides a platform for young musicians to showcase their talents in an intimate setting.
- **Continued support through the J&W Murphy Mental Health and Wellness Initiative:** This program provides students with a safe space to seek professional consultation for various needs, including career guidance, managing performance anxiety, and injury rehabilitation.
- **An exciting new partnership with Xenia Concerts:** This collaboration expands workshop offerings, equipping students with the essential skills required to thrive in the ever-evolving musical landscape.

After weeks of concentrated lessons, rehearsals, and chamber concerts, NYO Canada's talented young musicians will embark on the awaited Horizons Tour. Beginning on July 18th, the orchestra will journey across Western Canada to captivate audiences in eight Canadian cities: Kingston, Toronto, Parry Sound, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Edmonton, Banff, and Calgary. Gracing some of Canada's finest concert halls, musicians will present a diverse repertoire featuring iconic works by Béla Bartók, Lili Boulanger, and Jean Sibelius, alongside a newly commissioned piece by Iranian-Canadian composer Danial Sheibani.

This summer is shaping up to be a truly memorable experience for all. NYO Canada extends its heartfelt gratitude to its donors, audiences, faculty, and alumni for their continued support in nurturing the next generation of Canadian musicians.



# INTRODUCING NAOMI WOO

NYO CANADA'S FIRST FEMALE MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR

The National Youth Orchestra of Canada proudly announces Naomi Woo as its inaugural female conductor for the upcoming 2024 and 2025 seasons. This appointment marks a notable milestone not only for NYO Canada but also for the classical music industry as a whole, showcasing significant strides towards achieving gender equality in orchestral leadership.

Naomi Woo is no stranger to the Canadian music scene and brings a wealth of experience to her new role. Fluent in both English and French, she has conducted major orchestras nationwide, including performances with renowned ensembles such as the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal, and Toronto Symphony Orchestra.



Under the mentorship of acclaimed conductor Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Naomi has cemented her reputation as a formidable force in the orchestral domain. She currently serves as an Artistic Partner with the Orchestre Métropolitain for the 2023/24 season and will assume the position of Assistant Conductor with the Philadelphia Orchestra for the 2024/25 season.

Naomi's professional journey is marked by several notable achievements. She held the role of Assistant Conductor of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra for four years and held the pioneering role of the first-ever Music Director of Sistema Winnipeg. Furthermore, she was the recipient of the prestigious 2022 Canada Council for the Arts Virginia Parker Prize, awarded for her significant contributions to the Canadian music landscape.

"I'm really excited for the musicians of NYO 2024 to come away from the experience feeling inspired, optimistic and positive about the future of classical music, the future of their place in the field, and the place of all their peers, colleagues and new friends. And I also hope that, like I was at that age and continue to be, they come away completely addicted to the feeling of what it's like to be a small part of something so much bigger than yourself; how the whole can be so much more than the sum of its parts," said Naomi Woo.

As NYO Canada's first female Music Director, Naomi Woo's journey is a testament to her unwavering dedication, exceptional talent, and commitment to pushing boundaries in the classical music sphere. Her appointment ushers in a new era of innovation and inclusivity for NYO Canada, as the organization continues to inspire the future of the Canadian musical landscape.



# JAMIE SLAWSON

2024 NYO CANADA COMMISSIONED VISUAL ARTIST



Jamie Slawson is an artist living in Regina, Saskatchewan. Specializing in watercolours and oils, he has recently broadened his artistic practice to encompass digital art. Interested in community connections, Jamie's practice has been built around teaching and creating with people from diverse backgrounds, abilities, and ages. As a painter and facilitator, he has been an Artist-in-Residence with SaskAbilities, Generating Momentum, and the University of Regina.





# DANIAL SHEIBANI

2024 SOCAN EMERGING COMPOSER

NYO Canada is thrilled to introduce Danial Sheibani, an Iranian-Canadian composer, conductor, pianist, vocalist, and educator, as the recipient of the 2023 SOCAN Young Composers Award and the NYO Canada Emerging Composers' Mentorship Program. The upcoming premiere of his commissioned work at the Horizon's Tour Toronto Koerner Hall concert promises to showcase his distinctive approach to orchestral composition and storytelling.

Currently in his third year at the University of Toronto, Danial has studied under renowned mentors such as Richard Danielpour, David Serkin Ludwig, and Christos Hatzis. His compositions have been performed by leading ensembles including the University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra and the MacMillan Singers, captivating audiences across various venues.

Reflecting on his creative process, Danial emphasizes the individuality of each piece, weaving narratives that evoke vivid imagery and emotional resonance. Taking inspiration from composers like Mendelssohn and his experiences at Toronto Symphony Orchestra performances, he draws from a wide range of influences, from classical masters to contemporary rock and jazz, infusing his compositions with a rich tapestry of sounds and emotions.

Looking ahead, Danial envisions exploring diverse artistic collaborations, incorporating philosophy, and pushing the boundaries of musical expression. His advice to aspiring composers resonates with his own journey: be genuine, extend generosity through music, and write what moves you.



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## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



### DENIS BLUTEAU – FLUTE

NYO Canada is excited to feature Denis Bluteau, who will return as a faculty member after a break of more than a decade since 2012. Denis completed his music studies at the Conservatoire de musique de Chicoutimi under the guidance of Mr. Jean Morin, and later at the University of Montreal, where he obtained a Master of Music degree in performance (Flute) in 1988 under the direction of Mr. Robert Langevin.

Denis Bluteau currently imparts his knowledge as a flute teacher at the Faculty of Music of the University of Montreal and the McGill Schulich School of Music.



### JACINTHE FORAND – FLUTE

An accomplished NYO Canada alumna (1995), Jacinthe Forand will join for her first summer as an exciting addition to the flute faculty. Trained at the Montreal Conservatory of Music, Jacinthe completed her collegial, undergraduate, and graduate diplomas in Jean-Paul Major's class. She subsequently obtained a master's degree in orchestral performance at the Manhattan School of Music and an artist residency certificate from Carnegie Mellon University under the renowned Jeanne Baxtresser.

Since 2001, Jacinthe Forand has held the position of principal flutist with the Orchestre Symphonique de Québec and has also performed as a soloist with this ensemble. She has been a flute professor at the Conservatoire de musique de Québec since August 2006.



# 2024 ORCHESTRA

## Violin

Chia-Hsuan Chen, ON  
 Sacha Dubé, QC  
 Anne Duforet, QC  
 Tatyana Gilson, AB  
 Simon Hauber, ON  
 Alicia Ingalls, ON  
 Noam Koubi, NS  
 Nourit Lacroix, QC  
 Ren Lamarche, ON  
 Emma Li, ON  
 Ivan Li, ON  
 Joshua Lin, ON  
 Fiona Marchetto, AB  
 Clara Moellman, ON  
 Jonathan Moellman, ON  
 Robert Mulchrone, AB \*  
 Vincent Poon, ON  
 Ting Wai Tegwen Sak, BC  
 Keshav Srinivasan, MB \*  
 Bennett Van Barr, ON  
 Claire Qiu, ON  
 Christine Wang, ON  
 Elizabeth Wride, ON \*  
 Esther Yao, AB  
 Sizhan Zheng, ON  
 Gexuan (Annabel) Zhu, AB

## Viola

Kevin Belvedere, ON  
 Lucas Chen, ON  
 Robyn Lianne Cheng, ON  
 Miriam ElSawi, ON  
 Pauline Gmyr, QC  
 Julian Huang, BC  
 Rachel Miner, ON  
 Sofia Morao Barreto, QC \*  
 Tasman Tantasawat, NS  
 Sasha Turgeon, ON

## Cello

Ethan Jeon, ON  
 Julian Lee De Vita, BC  
 Lexie Krakowski, BC \*  
 Aram Musco, QC  
 Christopher Reil, AB  
 Joshua Samuels, ON \*  
 Matthew Sullivan, ON  
 Fay Wang, ON  
 Joseph Wang, BC  
 Tiancheng (Aireleen) Zhu, BC

## Double Bass

Étienne Beaulieu-Gaul, QC  
 Cameron Breiter, SK  
 Dean Chen, ON  
 Ludovic Grell, QC  
 Charles-Étienne Meloche, QC  
 Benjamin Pastrana Mankovitz, QC  
 Sonja Swettenham, ON

## Flute

Alexis Bernier, QC  
 Arin Sarkissian, BC +  
 Yelin Youn, ON  
 Yihan (Hannah) Wang, ON

## Oboe

Sara LeBlanc, ON  
 Tyler Romesberg, ON  
 Addison Trustham, BC  
 Megan Yuen, ON

## Clarinet

Eugene Jung, ON  
 Daniel Ketter, BC \*  
 Andrew Neagoe, ON \*  
 Amanda Robertson, MB

## Bassoon

Eric Li, BC \*  
 Haolin Liu, QC  
 Abigail Minor, ON  
 Gabriel Nishikawa, MB \*

## Horn

Jonathan Kennedy, AB  
 Noah Larocque, QB  
 Mathilde Lepage, QC  
 Michael Nunes, AB  
 Laurianne Paradis, QC

\* 2024 Awards of Excellence

+ Canada Council for the Arts Michael Measures Prizes

## Trumpet

Elias Doyle, ON  
 Sam Ferguson, MB  
 Nikolaj Hansen, BC  
 Charlotte McIntosh, ON

## Trombone

Arnaud Milette, QC  
 Benjamin Storm, ON

## Bass Trombone

Luke Roussy, ON

## Tuba

Paulo John Rubio, MB

## Percussion

Andrew Busch, ON +  
 William Huang, BC  
 Chelsea Jaramillo, QC  
 Jackson Kelly, ON  
 Cassandra Wolff, ON

## Harp

Audrey Morris, ON  
 Rania Boudrias, QC

## BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR TODAY!

Monthly gifts allow you to make smaller, more manageable recurring gifts, which have a significant impact over time. Your gift will provide regular funding, making it easier to plan engaging outreach initiatives, create budgets for future tours, and expand our musical and artistic programming.

When you become a monthly donor, your support will directly benefit NYO Canada musicians by supporting music instruction, meals, accommodation, travel, and mentorship. See the impact of your year-long monthly donation. Choose an amount below to discover how it supports a musician's experience with NYO Canada:

- **\$10/month covers nine meals for one musician during the summer session.**
- **\$20/month provides a musician with four days of instruction with renowned faculty.**
- **\$50/month funds one musician's travel support for the entire tour.**

These are the ways you can become a monthly donor:

**Online through NYO Canada - <https://nyoc.org/support/donate-now/>**

**By Phone - Kindly call us at 416-532-4470 x 227**

**Online through CanadaHelps - <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/m/10343>**



Thank you for considering becoming a monthly donor.  
 Your support will greatly help the future generation of classical musicians nationwide.



# 2024 MICHAEL MEASURES PRIZE WINNERS

NYO Canada marks a momentous occasion this year as two exceptional musicians rewrite the award’s narrative as the winners of the 2024 Canada Council for the Arts Michael Measures Prizes: Arin Sarkissian is the first-ever flutist to claim the top prize, and Andrew Busch is the first-ever percussionist to claim the second prize. These monumental achievements pave the way for future instrumentalists to be recognized.

On July 19th, a special concert in Toronto’s Koerner Hall will celebrate Arin’s and Andrew’s worthy achievements. The evening, joined by Caroline Lussier from the Canada Council for the Arts, will showcase an award presentation for the winners and a performance of Einojuhani Rautavaara’s Flute Concerto “*Dances with the Winds*” featuring first-prize winner Arin Sarkissian. This promises to be an unforgettable evening.

## First Prize - \$25,000 – Arin Sarkissian



Arin Sarkissian’s journey with the Canada Council Michael Measures Prizes has been one of exceptional growth. His well-deserved second-prize finish in 2022 fueled his determination, leading to this year’s triumphant first-prize success. For Arin, NYO Canada expanded all faculties of his musicianship: “NYO Canada pushed me to new heights. It wasn’t just about the music - it was about professional development, becoming a true instrumental master, and crafting a unique artistic voice.” Arin currently holds the position of Principal Flute with the Victoria Symphony Orchestra. He is a winner of numerous competitions, a frequent guest artist with renowned orchestras, and was recognized as a rising star in a 2022 CBC article.

## Second Prize - \$15,000 - Andrew Busch



Andrew Busch shatters boundaries as the first-ever percussionist to be awarded a Michael Measures Prize. This defining win underscores the dedication and virtuosity evident in his music. Andrew is currently pursuing a master’s degree at the University of Toronto. He boasts a wealth of experience in both classical and marching percussion and has graced prestigious concert halls across North America and Europe. As he prepares to return for his second time at NYO Canada, Andrew describes the environment as the perfect space to collaborate with fellow talented musicians: “It’s about immersing myself with talented peers, pushing my technical boundaries, and gaining insights from incredible musicians.” His collaborative spirit and hunger for growth perfectly embody the NYO Canada experience.



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## ADVANCING MUSICIAN MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

### J & W MURPHY FOUNDATION INCREASES COMMITMENT WITH \$261,000 THREE-YEAR INVESTMENT IN MUSICIAN MENTAL HEALTH

NYO Canada is thrilled to announce the J & W Murphy Foundation’s generous and renewed support of the J & W Murphy Initiative in Mental Health & Wellness. With an increased commitment of \$87,000 annually for the next three years, the program will continue to be an authoritative presence in the development of young musicians’ skills in mindfulness, high-performance training, mental stability, and wellness in the increasingly demanding orchestral landscape.

With the help of the J & W Murphy Foundation, NYO Canada aims to:

- Provide ongoing mental support during training and tours.
- Elevate wellness as a core aspect of its mental health program.
- Teach proper nutrition habits.
- Support physical rehabilitation through Registered Massage Therapy (RMT).
- Develop skills in professional communication and social-emotional elements.
- Create inclusive arts environments.
- Prioritize healthy workplaces.
- Inform musicians about self-care opportunities.
- Offer a tailored 1:1 support program.

We are incredibly grateful for the continued support of the J & W Murphy Foundation in ensuring that future musicians have the tools and skills necessary to thrive in an ever-changing musical landscape.

### NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH XENIA CONCERTS PROMISES INFORMATIVE WORKSHOP SERIES

In response to the multifaceted demands of modern music careers, NYO Canada has partnered with Xenia Concerts to present a comprehensive workshop series curated to empower musicians at every stage. Led by seasoned facilitators Kayla Carter and Rory McLeod (2006 NYO Canada alumnus), these workshops aim to enhance musicians’ leadership, interpersonal skills, inclusivity, and self-care practices.

The series comprises four workshops designed to address key aspects of holistic musician development:

- **Leadership and Interpersonal Skills:** Participants will gain insights into understanding their roles, empathizing with colleagues, and fostering inclusive work environments across various musical settings.
- **Inclusive Teamwork:** Musicians will learn effective communication and boundary-setting techniques to foster inclusive and rewarding collaborations.
- **Self-Care Planning:** Through personalized plans, musicians will identify needs, recognize limits, navigate power dynamics, and develop adaptable self-care strategies essential for career sustainability.
- **Inclusive Concert Design:** Emphasizing accessibility and inclusion, participants will explore designing concerts that accommodate diverse audiences, embracing the ability to connect with the wider community.

NYO Canada is thrilled to welcome the Xenia Concert workshop series, which will equip musicians with the essential skills to foster a resilient and inclusive musical community.





# REMEMBERING GREG IRVINE (1956–2024)

A BELOVED BOARD MEMBER, ALUMNUS, TEACHER, AND FRIEND



NYO Canada deeply mourns the loss of Gregory Boyd Irvine, whose life exemplified the transformative power of music, resonating deeply within our organization and the wider musical community. His impact on NYO Canada and the musical world at large is immeasurable.

A dedicated educator at the University of Prince Edward Island, Greg's warmth, patience, and love for music inspired countless students, instilling in them a lifelong appreciation for the arts. Even after retiring in 2019, Greg remained a steadfast mentor to aspiring musicians, his passion for music undiminished.

Greg's extensive involvement with NYO Canada spanned decades, showcasing his musical talent and leadership qualities. Joining the board in 2014, Greg brought valuable insights from his experiences as a musician and educator, enriching our mission to nurture young talent.

Though Greg's absence leaves a void, his legacy endures through transformed lives, his enduring passion for music, and his unwavering support for NYO Canada's mission, inspiring future generations of musicians and educators alike. His memory will forever resonate in the hearts of all who knew him.



## ALUMNA SPOTLIGHT - JULIE RANTI

LOOKING BACK ON AN EXTRAORDINARY CAREER



Julie Ranti (NYO Alumna, 1978, '79, '80, '81) recently concluded a remarkable 39-season career as Associate Principal Flute with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, a position she has held since age 24. Trained at The Juilliard School and the Interlochen Arts Academy, Julie has studied under notable teachers, including Jeanne Baxtresser, Julius Baker, and Samuel Baron. She started her career with leading ensembles such as the Hamilton Philharmonic, Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Canadian Opera Company, and The National Ballet of Canada. Julie remains committed to fostering young talent as an NYO Canada alumna and long-time donor.

NYO Canada caught up with Julie Ranti to learn more about her musical influences and highlights and to hear her words of advice for aspiring musicians.

### What influenced your decision to pursue your career path?

I come from a musical family. My father was the principal trumpet of the OSM; my mother was a harpist, and they met at Juilliard. I never wanted to do anything else in life besides play in an orchestra!

### Do you have any career highlights you wish to share?

Aside from the 39 years of wonderful programs, conductors, soloists and tours with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, for 15 years I was a founding member of the Bach Consort. We put on concerts and donated all the proceeds to charity. Yannick Nézet-Séguin agreed to come and lead us in multiple concerts early in his career. Doing Bach's St. Matthew Passion with him when he was just about to start his career at the Philadelphia Orchestra was a definite career highlight!

### Do you have any memorable moments from your time at NYO Canada that you wish to share?

Being at NYO Canada when I was 18 was the first time I met young people with similar goals in life. It was SO inspiring! Also, I met some of my closest friends, with whom I am still friends! There is a group of us in Toronto who all played in the orchestra together, and we get together every Easter and Thanksgiving for a potluck dinner. We have been doing this for more than 40 years!

### Why do you choose to support NYO Canada?

I support NYO Canada because I want young musicians to have the same life-changing experiences that I had.

### Do you have any words of advice for aspiring orchestral musicians?

The orchestral world is very different today than when I was starting out. Becoming a fine musician means that you are learning to become a fine human being. If your musical skills take you down a different career path, you will have only gained by studying music intensely.

# HORIZONS TOUR AT A GLANCE

## REPERTOIRE

Béla Bartók	Concerto for Orchestra, Sz. 116, BB 123
Einojuhani Rautavaara	Flute Concerto 'Dances with the Winds'
Danial Sheibani	NYO Canada Commission
Errollyn Wallen	<i>Mighty River</i>
Paul Hindemith	<i>Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by Carl Maria von Weber</i>
Charles Ives	<i>The Unanswered Question</i>
Lili Boulanger	<i>D'un matin de printemps</i>
Maurice Ravel	<i>La valse, poème chorégraphique pour orchestre</i>
Jean Sibelius	Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 43
Joan Tower	<i>Fanfares for the Uncommon Woman, Part I</i>
Violet Archer	<i>Divertimento for Orchestra</i>

\*all repertoire is subject to change

## CONCERT DATES

City	Venue	Date
Kingston, ON	Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts	July 18 – 7:30 pm
Toronto, ON	Koerner Hall	July 19 – 7:30 pm
Parry Sound, ON	Stockey Centre	July 20 – 7:00 pm
Winnipeg, MB	Centennial Concert Hall	July 23 – 7:30 pm
Saskatoon, SK	TCU Place	July 25 – 7:30 pm
Edmonton, AB	Winspear Centre	July 27 – 7:30 pm
Banff, AB	Banff Centre – The Jenny Belzberg Theatre	July 29 – 7:30 pm
Calgary, AB	Bella Concert Hall	July 31 – 7:30 pm

## CONCERT PRESENTERS

Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts  
 Festival of the Sound  
 Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra  
 Edmonton Symphony Orchestra  
 Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity

## TOUR SPONSORS

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## MAJOR SPONSORS

