

# Nota Bene

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Celebrating Canada's finest emerging artists • **Met en scène le meilleur de notre relève artistique**

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## 2024 HORIZONS TOUR

The 2024 Horizons Tour marked the National Youth Orchestra of Canada's much-anticipated return to Western Canada. It brought energy, enthusiasm, and beauty to audiences across the Prairies and further cemented our role as a global leader in orchestral training. Supported by an incredible team of donors, audience members, staff, and faculty, our musicians dove headfirst into a summer of beloved orchestral classics and contemporary musical gems under the masterful guidance of our new Music Director, Naomi Woo.



BY MICHAEL NUNES  
2023-24 ALUMNUS (HORN)

After a transformative month of instruction at the Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts from professional musicians working in leading orchestras across North America, we performed our sold-out opening concert in Kingston, Ontario. The following days were an exhilarating blur as we took to the stage nightly—first in Toronto's Koerner Hall and then in Parry Sound's Stockey Centre—before flying the entire orchestra over the Great Lakes to Winnipeg.

While in Winnipeg, our staff and musicians recharged by attending the Canadian Museum for Human Rights and the Winnipeg Fringe Theatre Festival before leaping back into the fourth concert of our tour in Centennial Concert Hall. Following our performance in Winnipeg, the orchestra continued by bus through the Prairies to Saskatoon's TCU Place, where our sole Saskatchewanian orchestra member greeted our audience with roaring applause.

Our tour concluded in Alberta, with ample opportunities to explore the inimitable Canadian Rocky Mountains and performances in Edmonton's Winspear Centre, Banff's Jenny Belzberg Theatre, and Calgary's Bella Concert Hall. We are so incredibly grateful to everyone who believes in our vision and continues to help make life-changing summers like these possible!





# LOOKING AHEAD : 2025 SESSION AND TOUR

Planning for our 2025 tour is well underway, and we are excited to bring the Orchestra to the beautiful province of British Columbia. We are thrilled that Naomi Woo will return as our 2025 Music Director. Woo currently serves as the Assistant Conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra, where she works alongside the renowned Yannick Nézet-Séguin. She is also an Artistic Partner with the Orchestre Métropolitain in Montreal.

This summer marks NYO Canada’s return to Wilfrid Laurier University, which will once again host our training session. After three summers at Queen’s University — during renovations at the Faculty of Music — we are delighted to be back in Kitchener-Waterloo for the first time since 2019. We are grateful to Queen’s University and the incredible staff at the Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts for hosting us these past few years. We also look forward to performing in their beautiful hall during our 2025 tour.

In addition to Ontario performances in Toronto, Kingston, and Ottawa, next summer’s tour will feature concerts in British Columbia for the first time since 2017. Venues include the stunning Chan Centre at the University of British Columbia and concert halls in Nanaimo and Victoria. Audiences can look forward to interpretations of Mahler’s Symphony No. 5, Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 10, and more.



BY BRAYDEN FRIESEN  
2015-18 ALUMNUS  
(TROMBONE) AND STAFF  
MEMBER



# JACK LONG : A LEGACY OF MUSIC AND GENEROSITY

Jack Long, a towering figure in Canada’s music landscape and a treasured supporter of NYO Canada passed away at 95, leaving behind an enduring legacy. Jack’s influence reached far beyond the business world as a trumpet player and the founder of Long & McQuade, Canada’s largest musical instrument retailer. Through his passion for music, his dedication to making instruments accessible, and his profound generosity, he touched the lives of countless musicians across the country, including those of us at NYO Canada.

Jack’s connection to NYO Canada runs deep. Serving on the board from 2001 to 2002, his involvement was marked by a quiet yet profound commitment. His organization, Long & McQuade, has been a key supporter, providing much-needed funding needed to nurture the talents of young musicians. Jack understood the value of fostering creativity and saw NYO Canada’s mission aligning with his own.

After getting his music degree from the University of Toronto, Jack had a successful career as a working trumpet player in Montreal and Toronto. In an interview with Music and Sound Retailer, he said, “In 1956, I got the idea that I wanted to start a business. So, my wife bought me a book, which said if you want to start a business, start it in something you know. I didn’t know anything about anything except music. So, I thought I’d give that a try.”

His “try” has grown to an enterprise of over a hundred stores, employing hundreds of musicians. One of his employees said Jack Long was “the smartest man I know.” His commitment to music education includes employing over 1,000 teachers and supporting diverse music programs throughout Canada, including NYO Canada.

Jack’s contributions continue to resonate, and his legacy endures in the opportunities he’s helped create for the next generation of musicians.



BY SHARMAN KING,  
1968-69 ALUMNUS  
(TROMBONE)  
AND BOARD MEMBER

The passing of the torch is never easy, but Jack leaves behind a vibrant community of musicians who will carry on his passion. His family, including his sons Steve and Jeff, continue his work at Long & McQuade, ensuring that music remains accessible to all, just as Jack would have wanted.

We at NYO Canada are deeply grateful for Jack Long's life and contributions. His presence will be sorely missed, but his impact will be felt for years to come.



## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

### A DUET THAT LASTED OVER A DECADE : REUNION IN MUSIC AND MEDICINE

In the summer of 2014, the National Youth Orchestra of Canada (NYOC) was the backdrop for an unexpected yet enduring friendship—one (as you'll find out) that continues to persist over a decade. Among the talented young musicians embarking on an inspiring summer filled with rigorous training and performances in some of the most prestigious concert halls were Adam Caulfield and Yuchen Dai, whose paths first crossed with a mutual passion for music.

Their friendship grew stronger throughout the three consecutive summers they spent together, neither anticipating it would eventually lead them to this very interview that you're about to tune in on. A decade and medical degrees later, Adam and Yuchen became resident doctors at St. Michael's Hospital, which sits right in the heart of Toronto. Their paths had converged once more years later—not only in the hospital corridors but also in the Hart House Orchestra. This community-based orchestra provides an opportunity for University of Toronto students, staff, and Hart House senior members to share music with one another.

In their residency, Adam and Yuchen bring the same dedication and passion they once devoted to their musical endeavours. Despite the demands of their medical training that calls for long hours and commitment, Adam and Yuchen continue to stay involved with their musical roots, finding a sweet spot in the balance of both worlds of art and medicine. Yuchen, an internal medicine doctor and a violinist, shares, "When we're there [in the hospital], it's all about doing the best you can. But when you're home, you get to pace yourself. You can play music. I think there's something special about this balance."

You would be wrong if you thought their music-filled summer ventures ended ten years ago. In addition to their casual outings performing at hospitals and being esteemed members of the Hart House Orchestra, Adam and Yuchen will be flying to South Korea in August 2024 to perform with the World Doctors Orchestra among physicians worldwide. Perhaps it is the very familiar attributes rooted in their musical training—discipline, teamwork, and the pursuit of excellence—that prove invaluable in their medical careers.

Playing in the Hart House Orchestra "definitely reinvigorates some of that enjoyment for music, and to be able to bring that outlook to the hospital and combine those two worlds is very cool," shares Adam, who is a radiologist and the principal cellist of HHO. "Especially in a career like this, it's always fun to get some classical music in." In a world where the paths we choose often diverge, Adam and Yuchen's story is a testament to the enduring power of shared experiences and the unexpected ways in which our pasts can fulfil the futures of one another. Their reunion, both in the hospital and in the orchestra, highlights the rich interconnectedness that is offered by music and medicine.

This duet is a reminder that friendships can resonate throughout a lifetime and beyond the boundaries of time and space, reminding us that the harmonies we create together, whether in concert halls or operating rooms, can echo far beyond any single performance.



BY YUNA LEE  
2021-23 ALUMNA (CELLO)



Adam Caulfield



Yuchen Dai



# ALUMNI REFLECTIONS

WITH 1963-66 ALUMNUS WILLIAM EGNATOFF (FLUTE)

## **Why is NYOC so special to you?**

What I learned and experienced during my four NYO Canada summers 1963-66 has enriched my entire life. It strengthened the foundation for all my teaching and performing, including the seven years during which I earned my living primarily through music. It has given me a lasting bond with musicians and music-making right across the country.

## **What is your most cherished memory of your time with NYO Canada?**

I can't point to a single memory but to a myriad of details of making music with equally keen peers and sharing it with audiences across Canada and Europe—friendships and philosophical discussions, balloon water bombs from second-floor residence windows, playing 11 hours a day throughout the Edward Johnson Building, learning about beatless intervals from Nicholas Kilburn, the terror of playing piccolo in the scherzo of Tchaikovsky's 4th, buying records at Sam's and A&A's, train rides from Toronto to Vancouver and Halifax, playing with Walter Susskind in the new Philharmonie Berlin.

## **Why do you support NYO Canada?**

I'm happy to invest in the future of fine music-making in Canada, knowing that NYO prepares musicians not only for every aspect of a professional career but also for a rich and fulfilling life that comes from doing great things with and for others.

## **What would you tell someone thinking of making a gift to NYO Canada?**

Every dollar you invest will have a high return. Talented and dedicated young musicians are given opportunities for learning and performing they can't get any other way in Canada. It's a complete scholarship program including special awards and scholarships. Participants even get to mentor children through a special outreach program. Seasoned professionals gifted in teaching and mentoring are given the uplifting experience of guiding members through challenging and inspiring chamber music and orchestral repertoire and sharing their own lessons and experiences. Conductors are carefully chosen not only for their established reputations but also for their interest in nurturing young musicians to shape future orchestras. Audiences across Canada get to hear their own youth at peak performance. Finally, a dedicated board and staff ensure that the organization continues to grow as society evolves and attends to every organizational detail, making a great experience for everyone.

## **Why do you think music and the arts are essential, especially for young people?**

Many aspects of life can only be faced and understood through the arts. Through creativity and artistic expression, especially during early formative years, we learn more fully who we are and who we can become. We find our place in the universe and learn to cultivate our humanity.



*Vivienne Abbott, William Egnatoff, Harold Gomez, Merlin Naduriak, Barbara Allen, Elizabeth Gahn and Robin Christie*

## BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR TODAY!

To help change the lives of young Canadian emerging artists, please donate:

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

**By Phone - Kindly call us at 416-532-4470 x 232**

### **By Mail:**

NYO Canada  
219 Dufferin Street, Suite 300B  
Toronto, ON M6K 3J1



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



# REFLECTIONS ON THE NYO CANADA EXPERIENCE

## MUSICIAN TESTIMONIALS

### FROM 2024...



*Mon souvenir le plus marquant est notre premier concert à Kingston. Je me rappelle que l'énergie de l'orchestre était électrique, tout le monde voulait tellement bien performer pour ce premier concert dans une salle que nous connaissions si bien après y avoir passé deux semaines. C'est un concert qui restera toujours dans ma mémoire.* - **Mathilde Lepage – Horn**

*One memorable moment would have to be walking in the pouring rain to my own chamber concert. I remember sharing an umbrella with the cellist in my quartet, whom I just met a week ago (I had forgotten to bring an umbrella). We were laughing at the inconvenient situation and chatting as if we had known each other for much longer. That moment made me realize that we were in it together (the situation at hand and the challenges and obstacles of pursuing a career in music in general) and that music can bring people close so quickly.* - **Anonymous**



*My most impactful memory was hiking up Sulphur Mountain at Banff with Felix (staff) and other eager NYO Canada members. We saw a gorgeous sunrise, and the hike was very fulfilling overall. It gave me a new perspective on Sibelius and made the experience in the city much more meaningful. My favourite music-related memory at NYO Canada was playing Sibelius for the last time. Although it was not the last concert, it was the piece I felt the most emotional playing. Under Naomi's baton, even though our run-through was not perfect, it was the most excited I had ever felt playing the piece. I learned that once you've put in the effort and the hours, you can take risks and have fun at the concert.* - **Ethan Jeon - Cello**

### FROM THE ARCHIVES...

*"NYO Canada is one of Canada's national treasures. Participating in its sessions was without question one of the most important and formative experiences of my life."* - **Dr. Paul Hawkshaw, Professor Emeritus Yale University, School of Music (Alumnus 1973-75)**



*"NYO Canada was the best thing that ever happened for my musical career."* - **Rhian Kenny joined the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra in 1990 as principal piccolo, (Alumna 1988-90)**

*"As a student I looked forward to NYO Canada. When I was a member of the faculty, I looked forward to NYO Canada For 15 years now, my students have been looking forward to NYO Canada. What more can I say? NYO Canada has been a part of my life for 25 years!"* - **Gwen Thompson-Robinow, a Canadian violinist and recipient of the Order of Canada, has enjoyed a career of more than 50 years as a performer, educator, teacher, and coach. (Alumna 1961-67)**



*"My four years with NYO Canada gave me the opportunity to meet young musicians from across Canada, and many long-lasting friendships evolved from those summers."* - **Mary Ann Fujino, Violin. Montreal Symphony Orchestra (Alumna 1984-87)**



# 2024 AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

## SPOTLIGHT ON BMO WITH LEXIE KRAKOWSKI, 2024 ALUMNA (CELLO)

"It means so much to young artists to have the support of organizations such as BMO, and to have the chance to learn from the top artists in Canada. Thank you for everything you have done to support NYO Canada, and young musicians such as myself."

The BMO Award of Excellence provides young musicians with more than just financial support; it opens doors to transformative life-changing experiences.

Lexie, a talented cellist from Victoria and a 2024 BMO Award of Excellence recipient, found NYO Canada to be a sanctuary for her artistry. Beyond easing financial burdens, Lexie emphasizes the value of being part of a passionate, like-minded community where she could thrive.

She recalls a concert encore: "I looked across the orchestra—some were smiling, others had tears in their eyes. In that moment, I knew I was part of something extraordinary."

NYO Canada offers more than music training; it fosters essential life skills—collaboration, communication, and resilience—that shape young musicians for any future path. Awards like the BMO Award of Excellence empower artists like Lexie to confidently pursue their dreams, providing the courage to follow their passion and fostering personal growth.



Eric Li  
Bassoon, Richmond, BC



Gabriel Nishikawa-Madden  
Bassoon, Winnipeg, MB



Keshav Srinivasan  
Violin, Winnipeg, MB



Lexie Krakowski  
Cello, Victoria, BC



Sofia Morao Barreto  
Viola, Montreal, QC



Daniel Ketter  
Clarinet, Vancouver, BC



Grace Wride  
Violin, Toronto, ON



Robert Mulchrone  
Violin, Calgary, AB



Andrew Neagoe  
Clarinet, Richmond Hill, ON



Joshua Samuels  
Cello, Toronto, ON



# ADDITIONAL AWARDS



Mathilde Lepage  
Horn, Montreal, QC



Tasman Tantasawat  
Viola, Halifax, NS



Yelin Youn  
Flute, Vaughan, ON



**Brian G'froerer  
Memorial Scholarship**

**Stephen Sitariski  
Leadership Award**

**The Payne-Lyon Prize  
for Excellence in Flute**



*NYO Canada 2024 in Koerner Hall, Toronto, ON*



*Gabriel Nishikawa-Madden*



*Cameron Breiter*



# NEW FACES, FRESH PERSPECTIVES

## A WARM WELCOME FROM YOUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBER

Hello everyone! My name is Yeganeh, and I am thrilled to be one of the three new members joining the NYO Canada Board of Directors this year. As a proud alumna, I know firsthand the transformative power of this wonderful training institution– the unique mix of receiving mentorship from awe-inspiring professionals, the opportunity to cultivate meaningful, long-lasting relationships, and, for many, the first-ever opportunity to perform with a 90-piece orchestra in incredible halls around the country and abroad (shout-out Lisboa 2016 and Migrations 2018!). These are some of the reasons my summers at NYO Canada were so valuable to me and why I am so excited by the opportunity to contribute to the organization’s continued success.

It’s also my great pleasure to introduce you to the two exceptional individuals who are also joining the board this year: Christine Marino and Dr. Bruce Craig.

Christine Marino is currently a Chief Accounting Officer for Manulife Canada and a highly accomplished finance professional based in Toronto. Christine’s love for classical music started at an early age when she was introduced to orchestral music by her father. Growing up, she and her family were frequent patrons of the Toronto Symphony and the National Ballet, and her love and appreciation for the field grew as she embarked on her own musical journey with piano lessons at the age of 8. With a grade 9 piano RCM certification, along with a 4-year stint of violin playing under her belt, she says, “I can relate to musicians preparing for performances due to my own personal experience.” What makes her excited to serve on the board? “Being a part of the behind-the-scenes work involved as it culminates in the annual tour and closely witnessing the dedication and talent of these musicians.” Her expertise in financial management and strategic leadership will undoubtedly strengthen our organization’s foundation and ensure that NYO continues to be set up for success. We are very lucky to have Christine on the board.



BY YEGANEH SOTUDEHНИЯ,  
2016-18 ALUMNA (VIOLIN)  
AND BOARD MEMBER



NYO Canada visiting the Canadian Museum for Human Rights



Performance in Kingston, ON



We also welcome Dr. Bruce Craig, a passionate advocate for classical music and a seasoned non-profit leader based in Prince Edward Island. His love for the arts started in his youth as a French horn player in the Los Angeles area. Bruce has always had a strong belief in the importance of providing classical music opportunities to young musicians.

“I was fortunate to be on full scholarship for several years in the California Institute of the Arts Youth Program. Though it operated differently than the NYO, it still provided high-quality chamber music and orchestral training for young musicians in the Los Angeles area.”

His other passion, history, led him to a career in PEI, where he planted his roots and became a professor at the University of Prince Edward Island. Throughout his expansive career, Bruce has served as a director on many boards, including Orchestras Canada and the PEI Symphony. It was during this time when his personal connection to NYO Canada started, helping sponsor the stop in Charlottetown for the Edges of Canada tour in 2017 (I was privileged enough to partake in this tour as well, and have some incredible memories of PEI sunsets etched into my brain). In PEI, Bruce met his colleague and beloved former NYO Canada board member, Dr. Gregory Irvine. Together in 2022, they worked to gather sponsors for the Aurora 2023 tour stop in Charlottetown. It was in that concert that Bruce and his wife Patricia announced a \$250,000 legacy gift pledge for the ACCELERANDO Classical Music Performance Fund that they initiated through Charlottetown PEI’s Confederation Centre of the Arts. The fund provides ongoing financial support for live classical music performances in PEI with an emphasis on providing performance opportunities for young musicians. We are so grateful to have Bruce and his vast expertise on the board.

As for me, I’m a Persian-Canadian musician and educator currently based in Treaty 6 territory (Edmonton, AB). I’m passionate about using music to build bridges between people and cultures and, ultimately, as a tool for self-expression. I believe that music has the power to transform lives, which is why I have dedicated so much of my career thus far to working with programs that aim to increase access to this powerful gift, especially in equity-seeking communities. In the same vein, I am committed to ensuring that NYO Canada continues to provide life-changing opportunities for young musicians across the country. I’m honoured to be part of such a dynamic and dedicated team. I’m confident that together, we can shape a bright future for NYO Canada and, by extension, for music education in this country. Please join me in welcoming Bruce and Christine into the NYO Canada family!



Charleen Gorbet, Fred Gorbet, Kevin Latimer & Yeganeh Sotudehnia





# NYO UPDATE - WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Congratulations to our outstanding alumni on their recent appointments and achievements. NYO Canada alumni comprise approximately 30 percent of musicians playing in Canada's professional Orchestras, highlighting the vital role the Orchestra plays as a conduit to the profession.

Carolyn Farnand	Symphony Nova Scotia	Principal Viola	2014,2015,2016
Eric Braley	Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra	Principal Clarinet	2016
Danielle Greene	Edmonton Symphony Orchestra	Violin	2016, 2019
Jacob Valcheff	Victoria Symphony Orchestra	Principal Percussion	2018,2020,2021
Honoka Shoji	Orchestre Philharmonique du Québec	Principal Harp	2022, 2023
Luke Roussy	Kingston Symphony Orchestra	Bass Trombone	2023, 2024
Benjamin Storm	Windsor Symphony Orchestra	Principal Trombone	2024
Arin Sarkissian	Victoria Symphony Orchestra	Principal Flute	2019,2021, 2022(CCMM 2nd Prize), 2024 (CCMM 1st Prize)

We love to stay in touch with our alumni and are more than happy to help promote your successes and careers. Please let us know what you are up to by contacting us at [info@nyoc.org](mailto:info@nyoc.org)



Carolyn Farnand



Eric Braley



Danielle Greene



Honoka Shoji



Luke Roussy



Benjamin Storm



Arin Sarkissian





# ALUMNI ACROSS THE COUNTRY

## MONTREAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

**26%**

22 ALUMNI

85 ORCHESTRA MEMBERS

## ORCHESTRE MÉTROPOLITAIN

**37%**

19 ALUMNI

52 ORCHESTRA MEMBERS

## TORONTO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

**15%**

12 ALUMNI

79 ORCHESTRA MEMBERS

## VANCOUVER SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

**31%**

22 ALUMNI

70 ORCHESTRA MEMBERS

## CALGARY PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

**31%**

18 ALUMNI

58 ORCHESTRA MEMBERS

## WINNIPEG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

**27%**

17 ALUMNI

64 ORCHESTRA MEMBERS

## NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE ORCHESTRA

**35%**

16 ALUMNI

46 ORCHESTRA MEMBERS

## EDMONTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

**37%**

19 ALUMNI

51 ORCHESTRA MEMBERS

## SYMPHONY NOVA SCOTIA

**44%**

15 ALUMNI

34 ORCHESTRA MEMBERS

## REGINA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

**21%**

12 ALUMNI

58 ORCHESTRA MEMBERS



# Applications for Summer 2025 are now open!

Visit [nyoc.org/auditions](http://nyoc.org/auditions) to learn more about our 2025 audition process and for updates on our tour destinations.



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 Charitable Registration No. - 10776 4557 RR0001

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NYO Canada expresses sincere appreciation to David Popoff for the design of this newsletter

We are also grateful to Charles Frappier and Associates Inc. for their ongoing pro bono translation services



## MAJOR SPONSORS

Funded by the Government of Canada  
 Financé par le gouvernement du Canada



Mary-Margaret Webb  
 Foundation

Hodgson Family  
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