

# 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

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## 65 YEARS STRONG

### REFLECTIONS ON A MILESTONE SEASON

As we look back on 2025, NYO Canada's 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season, we have so much gratitude and pride for this year's musicians. This summer's tour took us from Toronto to Victoria, bringing audiences across the country memorable performances of Mahler's Fifth Symphony, Shostakovich's Tenth Symphony, and Debussy's *La Mer*, alongside the world premiere of SOCAN Foundation 2025 Composer-in-Residence, Nicholas Denton Protsack's *Across the Vaulted Night*. The tour also featured the virtuosity of Michael Measures Prize 1<sup>st</sup> Prize winner Justin Saulnier, whose interpretation of Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No. 2 wowed the orchestra and audiences alike! At the heart of it all were our extraordinary musicians, whose artistry and dedication brought this repertoire to life with passion and purpose.

The summer began with an important homecoming: after three years in Kingston, our training residency returned to Wilfrid Laurier University, in Waterloo, Ontario. There, more than 90 of Canada's most promising young musicians, along with world-class faculty came together to rehearse, study, and grow as artists and as leaders. A highlight of our time in Waterloo was the Big Little Concerts chamber music series, held at the Maureen Forrester Recital Hall. These free, community-focused events gave our musicians the chance to perform in a more intimate setting and offered audiences in Waterloo a unique opportunity to connect with the orchestra in a spirit of accessibility and openness.

This season also marked the conclusion of Naomi Woo's inspiring tenure as Music Director. Naomi's leadership over the past two seasons has been transformative, combining musical excellence with a spirit of mentorship that has empowered countless young musicians. Her artistry and vision have left an indelible mark on NYO Canada, and we are profoundly grateful for her time with us.

As we close the book on 2025 and look toward the future, we are mindful that none of this would be possible without you: our audiences, donors, and supporters. Your belief in NYO Canada sustains our work and fuels the dreams of young artists from across the country. With your support, we will continue to build a future where Canadian musicians thrive, and where communities across Canada can experience the power of music. - Andrés Tucci Clarke, Director of Impact and Engagement





# VOICES FROM THE ORCHESTRA



*One of my favourite NYO memories was during the double bass chamber music concert. Everyone was given the chance to improvise during a piece. Everyone took risks, made beautiful music, and most importantly, had fun!*  
Cameron Breiter – Double Bass

*The first rehearsal of Mahler 5 was when I heard the orchestra in full for the first time. It was very exciting to be a part of the section and blend my sound with colleagues.*  
Toby Mar – Trumpet



*My favourite memory was probably jumping in Lake Ontario with most NYO musicians after the Kingston concert; it was a lot of fun and even Naomi was there! Also, run club was a lot of fun and I made some very good friends through the club.*  
Malena Lorenson – Bass Trombone



## ALUMNA ROXANNE SICARD

### HOW NYO CANADA'S AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE SHAPE CAREERS

When Roxanne Sicard first joined NYO Canada in 2016, she had no idea how transformative her summers with the orchestra would be, not just artistically, but personally and professionally. Over the course of four years, she was awarded no fewer than four Awards of Excellence. Each distinction reinforced her growth and shaped the artist she is today.

Looking back, Roxanne reflects what set NYO apart from other youth programs.

*“Sans aucun doute le professionnalisme! Le stage du NYO forme des musiciens prêts à joindre des orchestres professionnels... la gestion de l'énergie lorsque nous partons en tournée!”*

That training changed everything.

*“C'est pendant ma première année au NYO que je suis tombée en amour avec le jeu orchestral... À partir de ce moment là, c'était très clair pour moi que je deviendrais une musicienne d'orchestre!”*

Today, she still plays in two ensembles with fellow NYO alumni.

*“Oui! Mes deux ensembles de musique de chambre actuellement sont avec des musiciens qui ont participé au NYO en même temps que j'y étais!”*

For Roxanne and many others, an NYO Award of Excellence is more than a scholarship; it's a springboard.



Roxanne Sicard, violinist  
NYO Canada 2016-2019 Alumna  
Four-Time Award of Excellence Recipient



A portion of the 2017 violin section



# AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

Each summer, NYO Canada honours outstanding musicianship, leadership, and potential through a range of merit- and need-based prizes — made possible by generous donors who support the next generation of Canadian musical excellence. Valued at \$5,000, these awards are granted to NYO Canada’s most advanced players.



**Alexis Bernier**  
Flute



**Shyler Macaggi**  
Viola



**Jackson Howard**  
Trombone



**Angeline Wang**  
Violin



**Félix Nunes**  
Cello



**Ryan Gao**  
Clarinet



**Andrew Mendis**  
Trumpet



**Hanna Wilson-Smith**  
Double Bass



**Noah Larocque**  
Horn



**Solana Frebold-Francey**  
Violin



## OTHER AWARDS



**Sarah Bell**  
Horn

**BRIAN G'FROERER MEMORIAL  
HORN SCHOLARSHIP**



**Cameron Breiter**  
Double Bass

**HILLIS PRAIRIE  
MUSICIAN AWARD**



**Hannah Wang**  
Flute

**PAYNE-LYON PRIZE  
IN FLUTE**



**Anna Yin**  
Violin

**STEPHEN SITARSKI  
LEADERSHIP AWARD**



**Malena Lorenson**  
Bass Trombone

**NICK ATKINSON  
BRASS AWARD**



# BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

## NYO CANADA'S FOUR-WEEK PROGRAM FOR 2026

The National Youth Orchestra of Canada (NYO Canada) is restructuring its renowned summer training program, transitioning to a four-week intensive format beginning in 2026. This strategic decision reflects the organization's commitment to long-term sustainability while maintaining the high standards of educational and musical excellence that define NYO Canada.

The restructured program will feature an innovative concurrent chamber and orchestral model, allowing musicians to participate in both streams simultaneously. This approach enhances faculty-to-student ratios and creates unprecedented mentorship opportunities.

"As much as we cherish our vision, we also feel a deep responsibility to safeguard the organization's future for the sake of Canada's musical heritage," said Christie Gray, CEO. "Reducing our program by one week allows us to adapt with care while continuing to uphold our core mission."

The decision addresses rising costs for transportation, accommodation, food, and facilities, while funding has not kept pace. However, NYO Canada will maintain its full \$23,000 scholarship program and \$1,500 honorarium for participants, ensuring financial barriers don't prevent talented young musicians from accessing this opportunity.

All essential educational components—dedicated faculty time, chamber music opportunities, sectionals, orchestral work, and wellness offerings—will remain unchanged.

## THANK YOU FOR MAKING THIS SUMMER - AND THESE FUTURES - POSSIBLE!

Joining our monthly giving program allows NYO Canada to continue providing these exceptional young musicians with a minimum \$1500 honorarium, and tuition free access to a world class 6-week program with a total value of more than \$23,000.

*"Especially for aspiring musicians like myself who come from an economically disadvantaged background, a program like NYO Canada holds immense value as many similar programs have economic barriers presents. This is made possible only through the generosity and kindness of our donors and empowers us to share our love of music with the world!" - NYO Canada 2024 & 2025 Alumni*

**EVERY** monthly donation makes a tangible impact on the experience of these incredible musicians:

- \$125/month (\$1500/year): provides one musician's honorarium, a key component to the accessibility of NYO Canada
- \$50/month (\$600/year): provides a musician with 32 meals during our summer session.
- \$25/month (\$300/year): gives a musician 3 days of invaluable music instruction and mentorship
- \$10/month (\$120/year): covers a day of tour travel for one musician
- \$5/Month (\$60/year): provides a musician with one day of healthy meals during training session

### Easy Giving Options!

One-time, Monthly or Securities donations via CanadaHelps  
Corporate matching to double your impact (check with your employer)  
Phone donations – call us at 416-532-4470

Sign-up to be a monthly donor online or contact  
Andrés Tucci Clarke at 416-532-4470 x 223 or [atucciclarke@nyoc.org](mailto:atucciclarke@nyoc.org).

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





# NYO CANADA 2026 : THE SUMMER OF YOUR LIFE AWAITS

A MESSAGE FROM THE 2026-2027 MUSIC DIRECTOR, DANIEL BARTHOLOMEW-POYSER

Hello!

I'm extremely excited about this coming summer.

NYO Canada 2026 is going to be something special. From mid-June through early August at Wilfrid Laurier University's Waterloo campus, we're bringing together Canada's most extraordinary young musicians to create performances that will be musically excellent, technically challenging, and emotionally moving.

The repertoire features pieces such as Prokofiev's Symphony No. 5, William Grant Still's powerful Second Symphony, Anna Clyne's vibrant Masquerade, Strauss's wonderful Der Rosenkavalier suite, plus a world premiere of a commissioned Canadian work. Among others!

Applications are open now, so don't wait! Auditions are due February 1st, orchestra announced in March.

Whether you're a returning member or applying for the first time: you belong here. This is your invitation to become part of the orchestral world in a deep way and have an incredible summer making lifelong friends.

I am really looking forward to working with you.

Best,  
Daniel



# CONDUCTORS AT A GLANCE

## CONDUCTOR STATS (1960 - 2025)

TOTAL CONDUCTORS

49

including guest and faculty conductors

CANADIAN CONNECTIONS

19

Canadian-born or naturalized

AVERAGE MUSIC DIRECTOR TENURE

2.5

YEARS

## RECORD HOLDERS

MOST APPEARANCES

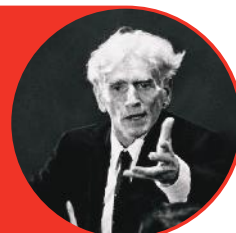
KAZUYOSHI AKIYAMA

11 times over a 31 year span (conducted 1973-2004, non-consecutive)



TIED FOR SECOND  
GEORG TINTNER

Austrian-born Jewish refugee, Member of the Order of Canada,  
NYO Canada's sole Nova Scotian conductor.  
Conducted 8 times from 1971-1989 (non-consecutive)



TIED FOR SECOND  
WALTER SUSSKIND

NYO Canada founder &  
Music Director of Toronto Symphony Orchestra (1956-1965).  
Conducted 8 times from 1960-1970 (non-consecutive)



Walter Susskind

Timothy Hutchins, Valerie Kuinka, Peter Rapson and Kazuyoshi Akiyama



# NOTABLE FIRSTS & MILESTONES

## OLDEST CONDUCTOR WILFRID PELLETIER

Born in Montreal, first artistic director of the Montreal Symphony Orchestra.  
Conducted with NYO 1960-1963



## FAMOUS FAMILY CONNECTION ANTON COPPOLA

Italian-American conductor (with NYO in 1980),  
uncle of legendary director Francis Ford Coppola



## NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE CONNECTION MARIO BERNARDI

Founding conductor of the National Arts Centre Orchestra.  
Conducted with NYO in 1997 and 1999



## SASKATCHEWAN REPRESENTATION WALTER BABIAK

NYO's only conductor from the prairies. Conducted in 1962 and 1968



## FIRST FEMALE MUSIC DIRECTOR NAOMI WOO

First woman to serve as Music Director of NYO Canada.  
Conducted 2024-2025



## FOUNDING YEAR CONDUCTORS (1960)

VICTOR FELDBRIL (Ontario)  
WILFRID PELLETIER (Québec)  
WALTER SUSSKIND (Principal Conductor)  
HARMAN HAAKMAN (Guest)

NYO Canada is proud of the many musical directors we've had over our 65 years! We're excited for the new musical voices we'll hear from in the future.

This conductor database (1960-2025) is a work in progress compiled to the best of our abilities. If you have corrections, additional information, or personal knowledge that differs from what's listed here, please reach out to Emily Dunbar at [edunbar@nyoc.org](mailto:edunbar@nyoc.org). Your contributions help us build a more complete historical record.



## APPLICATIONS FOR SUMMER 2026 ARE NOW OPEN!

Visit [nyoc.org/auditions](https://nyoc.org/auditions) to learn more about our 2026 audition process and for updates on our tour destinations.



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