



THE BEAT GOES ON! YONA'S BACK FOR YEAR 12



By Trena Taralson

YONA (Youth Orchestra of Northern Alberta) welcomed back 248 students across our five sites this year. We are thrilled to see both familiar faces and many new students embark on their musical journeys.

One exciting change this year has been the addition of 9 new percussion students from grades 5 & 6 at the Winspear Centre site. This is the largest percussion class the program has seen in 5 years.

According to Elaine Stepa, their YONA Teaching Artist, the group is already having a blast.

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While they’ve only been at YONA for a couple of months, the students have nothing but positive things to say.

“The staff are very nice and friendly and the Winspear is really fancy and interesting.”

“I like YONA because it is fun here and I get to see my friends out of school.”

“I like the nutritional snacks and percussion!”

“I love Ms. Elaine and the fact that we get to go to the Winspear every day.”



YONA’s Winspear Centre site is also home to the La Bruyère Orchestra, which includes the most advanced students in the program. This year there are 22 students taking part in the program from Junior High or High School. **For one viola student, this is her 9th year in YONA!**

According to the Winspear Centre Site Coordinator, Olivia Menard, the older students often share a desire to help and give back to their younger peers.

"Many of the students in older grades can be seen mentoring their younger orchestra colleagues, within their section but also across the orchestra. They are also patient and happy to listen to instructions they might not need to hear while they wait for their younger colleagues to catch up.

They go through great lengths to get themselves to YONA: many of them take public transportation for upwards of 45 minutes to ensure they can be at rehearsal and class.

The younger students look up to them and have improved in musicianship and behaviour to be more like their peers."

This mentorship is a testament to the strong sense of community YONA fosters, where students not only develop musical skills but also life skills like leadership, responsibility, and compassion.

YONA continues to be a nurturing, inclusive environment where music brings together students to learn, grow, and inspire one another.

Here's to another successful year at YONA—where music creates community and students find their place to shine!

YONA SPOTLIGHT: ADALIA, BASS STUDENT

How long have you been in YONA?

This is my fourth year.

Favourite thing about YONA?

I can play an instrument and we can go downtown to the Winspear.

Favourite thing about the Winspear?

We can go to Churchill Square for break.

Favourite piece played at YONA?

Viva la Vida.

How does it feel playing in La Bruyere Orchestra?

It feels good because I know that I'm good at playing the bass.



What would you tell younger musicians?

You should always keep trying even if you mess up once. It will get better in the end.

What do you want people to know about YONA?

YONA is a place where kids can come to learn to play an instrument for free. It's very good to learn how to play instruments, have break, eat snack, and play music. You should always keep trying even if you mess up once. It will get better in the end.

YOU CAN VISIT YONA!

YONA TOURS

Register today



Come and see for yourself the difference YONA-Sistema is making in the lives of children! Tour one of our YONA sites and learn how this music program is positively impacting hundreds of children in priority neighbourhoods across Northern Alberta.

Upcoming Dates:

- Winspear YONA Site Tour – November 26th from 5 to 6 PM
- Winspear YONA Site Tour – January 14th from 5 to 6 PM

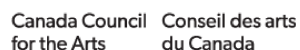
To RSVP, please email Trena Taralson at ttaralson@winspearcentre.com.

Space is limited, sign up today!

You can keep up to date on all of the happenings at YONA, learn more about our amazing students and staff, and what they're working on.

Instagram: [@yonasistema](https://www.instagram.com/yonasistema) | Facebook: [YONA-Sistema](https://www.facebook.com/YONA-Sistema)

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