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WINSPEAR | ESO



YONA

DON'T MISS *ROAD TO JOY* PRESENTED BY EPCOR!



By Trena Taralson

Mark your calendars for June 4th and make your way to the Winspear Centre for YONA's annual fundraising concert ***Road to Joy*** presented by EPCOR!

This is an evening that is not to be missed! Students from all 5 YONA sites will be coming together for an evening of fun, music, and inspiration. While it is a free event, everyone will be asked to make a meaningful contribution to the program – which is provided free of charge to all YONA families.

Featured in this year's program will be a refresh of the YONA Medley that concludes the concert. This piece contains a variety of repertoire the students have learned throughout the year, while still concluding with "Ode to Joy", which has become a favourite moment for many.

YONA teaching artist, Natalie Boisvert, worked with retired ESO member and composer, John McPherson, to re-imagine the piece. The orchestrations even include parts for future clarinet and oboe players that YONA currently doesn't have but may expand to in coming years.

You can expect some complex pieces to be included as well, as both the Community Orchestra and La Bruyère Orchestra grow and challenge themselves to learn more difficult music.

“For our younger students, it is really quite an experience to participate in such a huge, epic piece of music.” says Boisvert.

“For our older students, there is the added pleasure of playing "old" favourites, and they become aware of their own progress when they realize that a piece that seemed so challenging to them a year before seems so easy now!”

It will be a packed stage as usual, according to Boisvert, as the YONA team works to include everyone in the program in the celebration. “We can't fit 200+ kids plus the ESO on the stage, so some kids perform from the choir loft (by memory because they can't have music stands), typically our very youngest beginners will be singing and dancing in the aisles.”

The concert takes place on June 4th at 7 pm at the Winspear Centre. [Click here](#) to claim your complimentary tickets today!

Moving Up

A milestone in the YONA program is when students are ready to join in one of our two Orchestras. Our Community Orchestra is for intermediate level students at sites across Edmonton. Throughout the year, we offer them special opportunities to rehearse and perform together as a full orchestra.



When ready, students may also advance to the La Bruyère Orchestra, our most advanced level, which rehearses at the Winspear Centre. This year, 23 students moved up to the Community Orchestra, and 22 others advanced into the La Bruyère Orchestra.

Zin Min, a fourth year cello student, is one of those who moved into the La Bruyère Orchestra at the Winspear this year. He's appreciated the different opportunities he's been given at this level. "Being in the La Bruyère Orchestra gave me more responsibilities, but more rights and freedom. It's made me have a deeper understanding of music, made me more interested in music."



YONA SPOTLIGHT: TESFA, CELLO STUDENT



Tesfa is in grade 4 at St. Teresa of Calcutta School, 1st year at YONA.

What instrument do you play?
Cello.

How would you describe YONA?
YONA is an orchestra where you learn and play music- it's like a musical club!

What is your favourite part of YONA?
Cello playing and listening to music is my favourite part of YONA.

What is your favourite song to play?
Hoedown.

What do you want to be when you grow up?

I want to be a professional cellist – this is something I discovered when I started at YONA.

“I appreciate YONA, it’s really nice.”

YONA DONOR PROFILE: JANE SQUIRE HOWDEN

How did you and your husband come to know about YONA?

Don and I came to know about YONA when Don volunteered with Boys and Girls Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Edmonton and Don's "little brother" was in the program. Music was one of the interests that both Don and the young boy shared. Our first concert with YONA was Road to Joy and it was so joyful. Seeing children of all ages playing these wonderful instruments and seeing the happiness and pride on their faces, was magical.



YONA Donor Jane Squire Howden

What has been your experience in watching the kids grow in the program?

We had the opportunity to see Don's "little brother" and his younger brother grow and develop in YONA. With the after-school programming that YONA provided, we could see how much they enjoyed, not just the music, but the friendships they developed. Both boys became more confident in all areas of their life.

Why is YONA a program that you believe in supporting, and what would you say to others to encourage them to add their support?

I believe YONA is so worth supporting as it provides these young people with exposure to music that they would not get in any other way. They get to play the best instrument with the best instructors. When they start to learn a new song, they are not sure what they are doing, but as the days progress, all their hard work comes together, and the product is this beautiful piece of music. It shows these children what success looks and feels like. They have after-school care that is fun and encourages them to achieve new goals. Music is the focus of the program, but the kids get to run around, have snacks and to meet really interesting people.

What else would you like to share?

YONA makes my heart sing! Many of these children do not have an easy life, but YONA brings out the best in each of them and helps them realize the potential that is inside them.

APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN FOR YONA POST-SECONDARY SCHOLARSHIP



Current YONA-Sistema students and alumni are invited to apply to our YONA-Sistema Scholarship for post-secondary education support. To be eligible, students/alumni must:

- Have completed at least one year of YONA programming
- Intend to pursue a program of study leading to a recognized licence, certificate, diploma, undergraduate or professional degree
- Intend to pursue a program of study that is at least 9 months long

Funds will be awarded to students pursuing school within the same academic year that they apply to the YONA-Sistema Scholarship.

Successful applicants will be required to submit proof of enrollment in their post-secondary institution before receiving their scholarship award.

[Click here to apply.](#) Applications will close on June 23rd at 9am MDT.

Thank you to Phyllis A. Arnold and Maurine Maslen for their generosity and support of youth as they pursue post-secondary education.

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](#)

Facebook: [YONA-Sistema](#)

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