A NEW RHYTHM FOR COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA



Year 14 of YONA got underway in early September, with students returning to rehearsals and welcoming dozens of new musicians into the program. This year also brings an exciting change for YONA's Community Orchestra students.

Previously, the intermediate level students who make up the Community Orchestra rehearsed every few weeks at one of YONA's school sites. This year, they're coming together every Thursday afternoon at the Winspear Centre, more than doubling the rehearsal time they have previously had together.

"Coming together every week will allow them to play through more music, build effective ensemble habits (non-verbal communication, active listening, teamwork, etc.), and settle into deeper relationships. This is an incredible addition to our program!"

— Jacquie McNulty, YONA Manager





The Community Orchestra is made up of 44 students from St. Alphonsus, St. Teresa, and St. Catherine schools this year. Leading the rehearsals this year is YONA's long-time bass Teaching Artist, Andreas, who has stepped into the role of Community Orchestra conductor.

"This year in Community Orchestra is our biggest yet. With weekly rehearsals, we are truly able to realize the goal of “community” in this orchestra. This sense of friendship, camaraderie, and community really comes through in the music, and I look forward to our first concert!"

— Andreas, YONA Community Orchestra Conductor

For students, the new weekly rehearsal model means more time making music together, building friendships, and developing the skills that come with playing in an ensemble.

"I'm really excited to practice some new songs, and play and learn!"

— Susanna, YONA violin student

We're also excited about a new collaboration taking place at the Winspear Centre every week. Every Thursday, nine students from Kipohtakâw YONA are joining the Junior Percussion class for the afternoon, creating even more opportunities for students from across the program to learn and make music together.

YOU HELP MAKE MOMENTS LIKE THESE POSSIBLE





Over the past couple weeks, YONA's newest musicians reached an exciting milestone: receiving their very own instruments.

In the photos above, you can see moments from our recent instrument graduation ceremonies, where after weeks of preparing on a cardboard or plastic replica, students were presented with their real instruments and played them for the first time.

From those careful first notes to proud smiles shared with family members, these celebrations were a reminder of what's possible when children are given the opportunity to learn and grow through music.

This fall, YONA welcomed dozens of new students into brass, percussion, cello and clarinet classes. When they join, every new student is given access to quality instruments, music supplies, and ongoing repairs to keep those instruments in playing condition.





That's why coming up on December 1st, for Giving Tuesday, we're asking for your help to raise the **$16,200** needed to cover this cost over the next year.

Your gift makes a difference:

- **$30** covers the cost of a pack of new violin strings
- **$100** covers the cost of a cello bow
- **$850** covers the cost of a new trumpet

And thanks to EPCOR, every dollar you give will be matched dollar for dollar, up to $25,000, doubling your impact.

The smiles in these photos tell the story better than words ever could. Behind every instrument is a child discovering confidence, creativity, and a community where they belong.

Give today and help put an instrument into the hands of a child.

FROM CARDBOARD TO CELLO



Our new cello students received their real instruments just last week, but they started learning about the instrument, and how to take care of it, with a cardboard version back in September.

Each cardboard cello was cut and carefully crafted by a team of volunteers over the summer. We want to say a big thank you to the volunteers from National Bank who cut out the pieces for 20 cardboard cellos, and to the YONA volunteers who glued and assembled them!

These cardboard cellos gave our new students an opportunity to learn the parts of the instrument, develop proper posture, and practice foundational techniques in a fun and accessible way.

We are grateful for the time you gave to make those first moments of learning possible.



YONA SPOTLIGHT: MIGUEL, VIOLIN STUDENT



Miguel, YONA student at our St. Catherine site

How long have you been in YONA?

Two and a half years.

What's your favourite piece you've learned this year?

Capybara Cha Cha.

What would you tell a friend about YONA?

At YONA, you meet a lot of nice people and nice teachers, and you make a lot of friends, plus free snacks!

If you could play any song on your instrument, what would you play?

In my mind by Dinoro.

THANK YOU, D'ADDARIO FOUNDATION

We're delighted to announce that YONA has received a Community Music Grant! Thank you to the D'Addario Foundation for your ongoing support of our organization and our community.

The D'Addario Foundation's belief in inclusive, engaging music education mirrors what happens at YONA every day. Their mission to get kids playing early and often is exactly what our program provides: a welcoming space where young people build confidence, connection, and creativity through music.

We're grateful to be part of the network of organizations the D'Addario Foundation supports each year, and proud to continue this work together.



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

THANK YOU













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