

**PRESS RELEASE – COMUNICATO STAMPA – PRESSEMITTEILUNG – COMMUNIQUÉ DE PRESSE**

22 June 2018

## **In partnership with Sistema England, Sistema Europe's annual Summer Residency comes to London and Birmingham for a celebration of social action through music.**

**The 2018 Sistema Europe Youth Orchestra Summer Residency features over 200 young musicians from across Europe, the inspiration of Sistema England's *Young Leaders Programme*, guest artists Nicola Benedetti, Sascha Goetzl, Jessica Cottis and Jesus Uzcategui, and performances at Southbank Centre's newly renovated Queen Elizabeth Hall and Birmingham's Symphony Hall.**

The **Sistema Europe Youth Orchestra (SEYO)**, with over 200 young musicians, aged 10 to 21 years old, and 50 teachers from 19 Sistema and Sistema-inspired 'social action through music' programmes in 15 countries, will come to London and Birmingham for its 5th edition, SEYO 2018, celebrating the power of music to unite nations, cultures and young people during challenging times for the UK and Europe. A further 400 children from local projects The Nucleo Project, In Harmony Telford and Sistema England Young Leaders will join SEYO18 for mass performances.

Performances at London's iconic Queen Elizabeth Hall and Birmingham's majestic Symphony Hall will capture the unique spirit of the global Sistema movement, as well as the legacy of musician and humanitarian Leonard Bernstein, as part of Bernstein 100, the worldwide celebrations marking what would be his 100th birthday. The Residency will champion contemporary composers including Errollyn Wallen, with star violinist Nicola Benedetti joining SEYO18 for the closing performance with the riveting final movement of Wynton Marsalis' Violin Concerto written specially for the artist.

The **SEYO18 Summer Residency**, hosted by **Sistema England and Sistema Europe**, will be held at the new Royal Birmingham Conservatoire from 18 - 28 August 2018, where the orchestra will be guided by international teachers from the Sistema Europe network, Chineke! orchestra and the Conservatoire.

SEYO is an annual event organised by **Sistema Europe**, the network of European programmes inspired by the Venezuelan 'El Sistema', founded 44 years ago in Venezuela by José Antonio Abreu. Previous editions have taken place in Salzburg (2013), Istanbul (2014), Milan (2015) and Athens (2017).

Youth ownership is the overall theme of SEYO18, with young musicians exploring self-agency in and beyond music. A focus on teacher development will also enable 50 teachers to share and develop further ideas and approaches to apply in their own Sistema settings and a new teacher training fellowship for students developed by Sistema England and Royal Birmingham Conservatoire will take place during the residency.

The Sistema Europe Youth Orchestra will be conducted by **Sascha Goetzl** (Austria), **Jessica Cottis** (UK / Australia), **Jesus Uzcategui** (Venezuela), **Etienne Abelin** (Switzerland), Superar Suisse co-founder and SEYO co-founder, **Samuel Matus** (Guatemala), music director at Turkey's Music for Peace Foundation and **Juan Carlos Maggiorani** (Venezuela), Artistic Director of Portugal's Orchestra Geração.

**Marshall Marcus**, President and Founder of Sistema Europe, and Trustee of Sistema England, said: *"SEYO 2018 will bring hundreds of Europe's young Sistema musicians and teachers to Birmingham and London for Sistema Europe's annual celebration of social action through music, this year inspired by England's extraordinary music education practice. Expect innovative performance platforms, youth leadership and a radical teacher training approach."*

**Julian Lloyd Webber**, Principal of Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and Founder of Sistema England said: *"Royal Birmingham Conservatoire is thrilled to welcome young musicians and teachers from Sistema Europe Youth Orchestra 2018 to Birmingham to make music together in our new state-of-the-art Conservatoire building. This magnificent and extraordinary international cultural collaboration proves once again that music has no barriers of language or politics, and we are proud to join forces with Symphony Hall in August to give a platform to this unique orchestra that will represent the vital Sistema movement in Europe."*

**Gillian Moore CBE**, Director of Music at Southbank Centre said: *"At Southbank Centre, we share Sistema Europe's belief that making music changes lives, and we are delighted to welcome young musicians from all round Europe and the UK to celebrate, perform and learn together. The music they will play is by composers who share this belief too with their generous and inclusive approach to music, such as Errollyn Wallen, Gustav Holst and, in his centenary year, Leonard Bernstein. The concrete and wood of the newly refurbished Queen Elizabeth Hall will be happily resounding to the sounds of young musicians. This gathering will make a real difference and I'm so very pleased that it will happen here."*

**Simi Ambass**, Sistema England Young Leader & Youth Producer said: *"Through SEYO18 we want to flip the script and give people unforgettable musical experiences through our personal struggles not despite them. Sistema programmes in Europe may face different social situations but we have a strong bond in knowing that we're with young people who are aiming for something more than what society expects of us. The inspiration we get from our fellow musicians in other countries fires us up with more motivation to push beyond what we believe to be our personal limits. SEYO 2018 in England will build on the successes of previous camps, sharing the spirit of young people who dare to dream."*

Tickets for the SEYO18 concerts are now on sale:

**Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, Sunday 26 August 2018, 5pm**

<http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on/126372-sistema-europe-youth-orchestra-2018>

(with public activity all afternoon around the Southbank Centre site)

**Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Monday 27 August 2018, 2.30pm** (public activity from 12pm)

<https://www.thsh.co.uk/event/sistema-europe-youth-orchestra>



The Sistema Europe Youth Orchestra (Photo credit: Marco Caselli Nirmal)

## Contacts and Media

For features, interviews or press passes please contact Matthew Cruickshank on

[webmaster@sistemaeurope.org](mailto:webmaster@sistemaeurope.org)

To download high-res images for publication visit [https://www.sistemaeurope.org/SEYO\\_2018\\_images](https://www.sistemaeurope.org/SEYO_2018_images)

For more about Sistema Europe Youth Orchestra visit [https://www.sistemaeurope.org/SEYO-Sistema\\_Europe\\_Youth\\_Orchestra/](https://www.sistemaeurope.org/SEYO-Sistema_Europe_Youth_Orchestra/)

Sistema Europe and Sistema England are grateful to **Hilti Foundation**, main partner of Sistema Europe, and **Royal Birmingham Conservatoire**, main partner for SEYO18, for their generous and essential support of SEYO18. Sistema England is grateful to its funders and supporters for the Sistema England Young Leaders who are proud to welcome and learn with their European peers for SEYO18.