



SYDNEY  
YOUTH  
ORCHESTRAS



MEDIA RELEASE FEBRUARY 2017

## Sydney Youth Orchestras launches

the

# Western Sydney Youth Orchestra

*Dedicated to identifying and nurturing talented young musicians from everywhere across greater metropolitan Sydney*

Sydney Youth Orchestras (SYO), in partnership with Riverside Theatres, is proud to announce the **very first Western Sydney Youth Orchestra (WSYO)**. This new orchestra pulls together the best young musicians from across Western Sydney to rehearse each week and then perform together in a series of concerts throughout 2017 and beyond in Sydney's Central city, Parramatta. Established in consultation with community and responding to the needs of young aspirational musicians, WSYO will enhance and complement the already excellent work undertaken by music teachers and schools in Western Sydney.

Led by highly regarded educator and conductor **James Pensini**, this classical orchestra will focus on the great works of Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven as a core part of the SYO orchestral Training Framework. James rose through the ranks of the SYO family himself on trumpet and is now Head of Brass, Woodwind and Percussion and Head of Bands at St Aloysius' College, Mosman – he also conducts the SYO's Symphonic Wind Orchestra.

The new WYSO, supported by Founding Partners Fort Street Capital with Dixon Advisory, aims to provide educational opportunities for musicians in Greater Western Sydney.

*“Young Western Sydney musicians might have been dissuaded from auditioning for SYO because of the distance to our main operations in Sydney city. Acknowledging this, we have shifted ourselves to where the musicians are, bringing SYO to them,”* says SYO CEO Yarmila Alfonzetti. *“We have people coming to SYO from far and wide, and we are excited about recognising talent everywhere. SYO's Strategic Plan includes firm milestones to address the most significant barriers to participation in classical music, and we know one of these is geographical location.”*

With almost **a quarter of the State's young people living in Western Sydney**, the establishment of WSYO will encourage participation from musicians who might not be able to make it into Sydney's CBD for rehearsals once a week. Youth orchestras create a unique, inspiring environment for young musicians where they can feel free to express what it is they are passionate about, even if that is classical music. *"We have 15-year-old boys hanging around after rehearsals discussing their favourite Mahler symphony or Strauss Tone Poem,"* Alfonzetti explained. *"The WSYO will have the same opportunities and educational experiences as the other senior orchestras in SYO. We believe that what we offer can inspire and change lives, and everyone deserves that. This is SYO core business."*

SYO began in 1973 with a single orchestra, but in 2017 the organisation will provide weekly orchestral training for musicians aged from 6-25 in 12 ensembles. *"We are dedicated to identifying and nurturing talented young musicians from across greater Sydney and beyond,"* said Alfonzetti, *"and once identified, we work tirelessly to provide them with quality opportunities, orchestral training and music education"*.

SYO is thrilled to be able to offer their outstanding orchestral training in **Parramatta** and look forward to working with these dynamic young musicians. Please join us for the inaugural performance at 2pm on Sunday 26 March at Riverside Theatres. To secure your tickets and for further information please visit [www.syo.com.au](http://www.syo.com.au)

## **DATES**

### **Corporate & Media Launch**

**Monday 20 March, 4pm-5pm**

Courtyard, Riverside Theatres Parramatta  
Corner market and Church Street, Parramatta

### **Inaugural Concert – Introducing WSYO**

**Sunday 26 March, 2pm**

Riverside Theatres Parramatta  
Corner market and Church Street, Parramatta

## **Tickets**

Adults \$15 + booking fee

Conc \$10 + booking fee

## **Bookings**

Online at [syo.com.au](http://syo.com.au) or phone 02 9251 2422

For images visit: [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/6zvy93mkd6ahmkw/AACb-9k6PbYATWLa\\_ZIRJfOOa?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/6zvy93mkd6ahmkw/AACb-9k6PbYATWLa_ZIRJfOOa?dl=0)

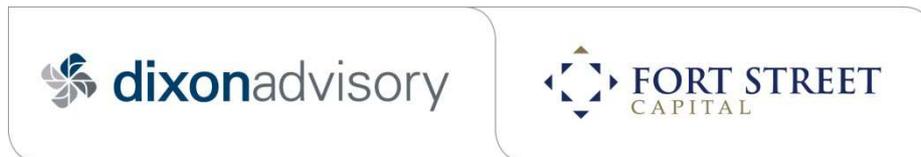
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**Western Sydney Youth Orchestra Founding Partners**



FOUNDING PARTNERS

Download the full media release here

**FURTHER INFORMATION / INTERVIEWS**

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## ABOUT SYO



For over 44 years, SYO has been a vital part of the cultural life of our nation by training thousands of talented young musicians to pursue their musical dreams and take their place in orchestras throughout Australia and the world. SYO has a strong track record of delivering a consistently outstanding educational and performance program across the primary, secondary and tertiary segments through to the pre-professional stage. The annual program has grown to encompass 12 ensembles with the thirteenth ensemble - the Western Sydney Youth Orchestra – commencing in 2017, with close to 500 young musicians aged 6-25 years, in a weekly foundation program of rehearsals, specialised tutorials and performances.

SYO fills its unique training role within the sector by functioning as a ‘feeder’ of talented musicians to organisations such as AYO (29% of 2014 participants), Sydney Conservatorium of Music, the Australian National Academy of Music, the Sydney Symphony Fellows (27% of all participants), ACO2 (16% of all participants) and beyond.

SYO alumni are placed in all of the professional orchestras in Australia, leading chamber ensembles such as the Goldner Quartet, Australia Ensemble, Ensemble Offspring and the Omega Ensemble, as well as orchestras internationally, including the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Berlin Philharmonic, the Halle Orchestra, Bayerische Staatsoper, and Hong Kong Philharmonic.

SYO’s program not only equips members for a career as a professional musician. The orchestral training program teaches teamwork, discipline, dedication, leadership, and a commitment to excellence. Whatever career path these talented young people follow, they are likely to become leaders in and contributors to the community, future audiences, donors and supporters. Whilst SYO has as its foundation a detailed Orchestral Training Framework ensuring that our students meet educational outcomes, the equal purpose of the organisation is to develop strong performance ability and a deep knowledge of repertoire.

## JAMES PENSINI



James Pensini started learning the trumpet in Year 5 when the trumpet was the only instrument left at school band tryouts!

James continued to play trumpet throughout high school and joined the SYO family in 2000 as a member of the Peter Seymour Orchestra. In 2003 James moved to the Sydney Conservatorium High School to further his studies.

James studied for his Bachelor of Music (Performance) degree at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and graduated in 2008. Whilst at the Conservatorium James had the opportunity to study conducting under Henryk Pisarek, a former Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Sydney Youth Orchestras.

As a trumpet player James toured in 2005 as Lead Trumpet of the Australian Youth All-Star Big Band on their tour to the United States of America including performances at the prestigious Monterey Jazz Festival. In 2006 James toured as Associate Principal Trumpet of the SYO Flagship Orchestra to Spain and Portugal and in 2007 James toured as Associate Principal Trumpet with the Australian Youth Orchestra in their 50th anniversary year tour to Europe. James has twice been part of the Symphony Australia conducting course for music educators as well as completing courses in Wind Band conducting with the Australian Band and Orchestra Directors Association and NSW DET Arts Unit.

James is incredibly passionate about music education and he has been engaged as a Conductor and Tutor for many of the finest Instrumental Music Programs run for young people at a school and representative level including many Department of Education and Communities State Music Camps. 2015 is James' fourth year leading the SYO Symphonic Wind Orchestra as Conductor.

On top of SYO James is currently Head of Brass, Woodwind and Percussion/Head of Bands at St Aloysius' College, Milsons Point and the State and National Treasurer of the Australian Band and Orchestra Directors Association. In 2017 along with the Western Sydney Youth Orchestra., James will also conduct the Symphonic Wind Orchestra