

Press Release 13 May 2016

*Palmusic* UK announces the

## Palestine Youth Orchestra UK Tour

18<sup>th</sup> July to 1<sup>st</sup> August 2016

Perth | Glasgow | Leeds | Birmingham | Cardiff | London



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### ***The Triumph of Youth & Talent - The PYO makes its UK debut***

This summer the **Palestine Youth Orchestra** (PYO) leaves the troubled olive groves of Palestine to tour Britain for the first time. Following a critically acclaimed performance by a smaller ensemble of the PYO (the Palestine Strings) with **Nigel Kennedy** at the **BBC Proms** in 2013, the PYO now embarks on its first ever UK Tour under the baton of **Sian Edwards** (Head of Conducting at the Royal Academy of Music), performing at world-class venues across the UK culminating with a concert at the **Royal Festival Hall**. Set against a backdrop of international political turmoil, these young musicians are poised to bring a message of inspiration and humanity to UK audiences.

Equally at home with Western and Arabic music, the PYO has a unique position amongst youth orchestras internationally. It was established by the **Edward Said National Conservatory of Music** in 2004 with the vision of bringing together talented students from all over Palestine and the Palestinian Diaspora. Despite the daily obstacles they face, their drive and passion for music has entranced audiences in France, Germany, Italy, Jordan, Greece, Oman, Syria, Bahrain and Lebanon.

Unable to rehearse together as an orchestra at home, the PYO will be meeting and rehearsing at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland between the 18<sup>th</sup> July-24<sup>th</sup> July 2016. They will be joined by the Palestinian singer **Nai Barghouti**, a rising star of Arabic music, and several students from leading British Conservatoires.

The **concert programme** will include:

**Beethoven's *Leonore Overture No. 3***

**Arabic songs** by **Om Kolthoum** and **Fairuz** sung by **Nai Barghouti**

**Graham Fitkin's *Metal*** - energy packed, pop inspired and suiting the PYO's youthful musical vigour.

**Arabic improvisations** in the PYO's own trademark style

**Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition***, the majestic orchestration by Ravel.

The **PYO 2016 Tour** will open at the state of the art **Perth Concert Hall, 25 July** (Tel 01738 621031, [www.horsecross.co.uk/whats-on/palestine-youth-orchestra](http://www.horsecross.co.uk/whats-on/palestine-youth-orchestra)).

They will then perform at the **International Society of Music Education conference** at **Glasgow Royal Concert Hall on 26 July** (Tel 0141 353 8000, [www.isme2016glasgow.org/outline-programme/](http://www.isme2016glasgow.org/outline-programme/)).

The PYO move on to **Leeds Town Hall on 27 July** (Tel 0113 376 0318, [www.leeds.gov.uk/townhall/Pages/Event.aspx?s=5447](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/townhall/Pages/Event.aspx?s=5447)).

A concert in **Birmingham Town Hall** takes place on **29 July** (Tel 0121 345 0600, [www.thsh.co.uk/event/palestine-youth-orchestra/](http://www.thsh.co.uk/event/palestine-youth-orchestra/)). While in Birmingham, the PYO will have a joint session with the **National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain** to explore music improvisation. They will give a late afternoon concert at **St David's Hall, Cardiff on 30 July** (Tel 029 2087 8444, [www.stdavidshallcardiff.co.uk/whats-on/palmusic-uk-presents-palestine-youth-orchestra/](http://www.stdavidshallcardiff.co.uk/whats-on/palmusic-uk-presents-palestine-youth-orchestra/)) The orchestra arrives in London at the end of a weekend of events at the **Southbank** coming under the umbrella of 'what the world needs now', which will explore various themes of art linked to social change. Their final UK concert will be at the **Royal Festival Hall, London on 1 August** (Tel 0207 960 4200, [www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whatson/the-palestine-youth-orchestra-97399](http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whatson/the-palestine-youth-orchestra-97399)) as part of the Southbank's annual **Festival of Love**.

**For further information and images, please contact:**

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#### **Notes to the Editors:**

**Sian Edwards** first conducted the PYO in 2004 and has since conducted the orchestra on tours in the Middle East, Italy and Greece.

The PYO UK Tour 2016 is organised in partnership with **the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Glasgow City Council, Leeds City Council, and Birmingham City Council.**

The **PYO will be coached** by professional musicians from **Scottish orchestras** and the **Oslo Philharmonic** (the PYO official coaching partner).

#### **Sian Edwards, Conductor:**

*"I am delighted to be working with the Palestine Youth Orchestra again, having conducted some of their earliest tours and witnessed the exciting development of the orchestra on every level. The excellent support of the ESNM, without which none of the orchestral projects would be possible, combined with the generous input of guest tutors and staff, creates a wonderful atmosphere that enables the young musicians to perform with a special passion and commitment."*

#### **Suhail Khoury, General Director of the Edward Said National Conservatory of Music:**

*"The young Palestinians are very eager to show their talent to British audiences and to illustrate the true Palestine, its culture and the humanity of its people."*

#### **Lord Cope of Berkeley, Chairman of Palmusic UK:**

*"This tour will be a wonderful personal experience for young musicians who normally live such restricted lives and a giant step in their musical development. Palmusic strives to help music open hearts and minds to Palestinian culture and open new doors."*

The PYO UK Tour has been made possible through the support of *The Consolidated Contractors Company, The Housing Bank for Trade and Finance, The Leche Trust, Hikma Pharmaceuticals* and individual donors and grant-makers. The PYO residency in Glasgow is generously supported by *Badenoch & Co, Glasgow City Council and the Scottish Friends of Palestine.*

*The PYO UK tour 2016 is supported using public funding by the **National Lottery** through **Arts Council England.***



#### **Palmusic UK**

Registered name: Friends of the Edward Said National Conservatory of Music UK

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