

**PRESS RELEASE ON BEHALF OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH ORCHESTRAS OF SCOTLAND  
AND BBC SCOTTISH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA EMBARGOED UNTIL 00.01, FRIDAY 23 JULY**

## **Pop star puts Scotland's young musicians in the mix**

C Duncan creates new work for innovative collaboration  
between NYOS and BBC SSO

Young musicians from the **National Youth Orchestras of Scotland** will still get the chance to play together- albeit virtually - and learn new skills this summer thanks to an imaginative collaboration with the **BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra** and Mercury Prize nominee **C Duncan**.

Starting this Monday, members of NYOS's Junior, Senior and Symphony Orchestras will take part in a week of online coaching to help them rehearse and remotely record a new work, ***Dance from a Distance***, written specially for them by musician and composer C Duncan (Christopher Duncan), commissioned by the BBC.

The work is a creative response to the restrictions still in place for musicians, and its parts are written to match the different ages (8 – 25) and skill-levels of NYOS's members.

NYOS and BBC SSO players will remotely record their own parts before the final mix is created by Duncan and posted online next month. Online workshops from BBC SSO players will share expertise about topics like leadership and give tips on having a career as a musician. The collaboration takes place in lieu of this summer's NYOS courses, cancelled due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

Glasgow-born C Duncan shot to fame when his debut album *Architect* was nominated for the 2015 Mercury Music Prize. A graduate of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, his music is known for combining classical sounds, choral harmonies and pop.

**C Duncan** said: "This has been a very exciting project for me to be involved with, as it shows that although day to day life has changed drastically over the past few months, new and innovative ways of working as a musician have come out of it. Writing a piece for three orchestras is fairly daunting at the best of times, however working remotely with musicians and recorded material meant there was a new element of freedom as the creative possibilities were endless."

**Nicolas Žekulin**, Chief Executive and Artistic Director, National Youth Orchestras of Scotland, said: "It has been challenging year for us all, with young people in particular missing out on so many opportunities. We are grateful to the players of the BBC SSO for offering their time and expertise to provide sectionals, coaching sessions and seminars for our three classical orchestras. We are delighted to be able to add an exciting creative element to the programme, with the opportunity to premiere a special commission by the wonderful C Duncan. While it can't replace the experience of a NYOS course, we're sure that Scotland's talented young musicians will learn a great deal from these memorable activities thanks to the BBC SSO and C Duncan."

**Dominic Parker**, Director, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, said:

“Keeping music learning interactive and inspiring during lock down has been at the forefront of our minds and we’ve had to adapt and grab new opportunities and ways of doing things. The BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra players are hugely supportive of their young colleagues in NYOS and this new mentoring partnership, born out of the circumstances we have all found ourselves in, is a reflection of that. We are really looking forward to working together, both on the mentoring scheme, and the new commission with brilliant composer C Duncan.”

**\*\*ENDS\*\***

For more details and interview opportunities please contact:

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## **NOTES FOR EDITORS**

### **About C Duncan**

Raised in Glasgow by two classical musicians, Duncan studied piano and viola before taking up guitar, bass, and drums in his teens, eventually studying music composition at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Assembling his songs one instrument at a time in a home studio, he submitted a demo to FatCat Records, which signed the young craftsman in 2013. His first single *For* was released late the following year, and his artful debut album, *Architect*, arrived in the summer of 2015 and was nominated for a Mercury Prize. In August 2016, Duncan released a new single, the dreamy, electronics-heavy *Wanted to Want It Too*, in anticipation of his sophomore long-player, *Midnight Sun*, which dropped in October of that year. His third full-length, *Health*, followed in 2019 and featured production by Elbow's Craig Potter.

For more information visit: [c-duncan.co.uk](http://c-duncan.co.uk)

### **About the National Youth Orchestras of Scotland**

The National Youth Orchestras of Scotland is unique in providing a complete orchestral experience for its students aged between 8 and 25, through its comprehensive pathway of orchestras, jazz bands, training ensembles and an ever expanding outreach programme. In addition to organising residential training programmes, intensive rehearsals and national and international concert tours, The National Youth Orchestras of Scotland is committed to introducing musical experiences to Scotland's young people through workshops in communities throughout the country. Its ensembles inspire audiences with their outstanding skill, youthful energy and panache. Audiences marvel at the powerful sound of its large-scale orchestras, appreciate the intimacy of its smaller chamber ensembles and delight in the fresh and uplifting performances given by its jazz bands. NYOS believes in the future of Scotland's next generation of musicians. Our students are proud to play with Scotland's National Youth Orchestras and we are passionate about nurturing and developing their talent.

**Classical and Jazz Applications for NYOS 2021 open on Monday 24 August with a closing date of Friday 25 September 2020. Auditions are absolutely free, and bursaries are available. To apply online visit [www.nyos.co.uk](http://www.nyos.co.uk)**

### **About the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra**

The BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra is renowned as one of the UK's most brilliant and versatile orchestras. Formed in 1935 and based at Glasgow's City Halls since 2006, the orchestra has a rich history of performing, broadcasting, recording and touring in Scotland, the UK and overseas. Thomas Dausgaard has been Chief Conductor since 2016 and has established several new focuses in the orchestra's concerts, including a 'Composer Roots' series, which places classical works in their contexts through collaborations with folk musicians, students and choirs, and a 'Scottish Inspirations' series of BBC Commissions from leading contemporary composers. The BBC SSO has long championed new music and has established strong links with local communities through its learning and outreach programmes. It is a partner in Big Noise, Scotland's project for social change through music; it plays a major role in the BBC's Ten Pieces initiative; and it maintains a close association with the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in Glasgow, working across a variety of disciplines with conductors, composers, soloists and orchestral players. The orchestra appears regularly at the BBC Proms and Edinburgh International Festival and it is a recipient of the Royal Philharmonic Society Award and of four Gramophone Awards. It maintains a busy schedule of broadcasts for BBC Radio 3, BBC Radio Scotland, BBC television and online.

For further information please visit: [bbc.co.uk/bbcsso](http://bbc.co.uk/bbcsso)