

# yes

**Young European Strings  
School of Music**



**Prospectus 2016**

# YOUNG EUROPEAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC – PROSPECTUS

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*“Music is our language.  
Through it we embrace the world.”*

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# Section I: Introduction and philosophy

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## History

Young European Strings was established in 1988 in Templeogue, Dublin 6W by native Hungarian and internationally recognised pedagogue, Maria Kelemen. Ms. Kelemen's interactive and creative methods of teaching music to young children are based on the philosophy of music education developed by Zoltán Kodály.

While string playing has existed for centuries, the real German, Hungarian, Russian (Old and New), French, etc. "Schools" of violin technique and pedagogy came about in the nineteenth century. Famous and legendary personages like Joseph Joachim, Carl Flesch, Leopold Auer and Jenő Hubay, all emanating from Hungary, established themselves in different parts of Europe, where they started and developed the different branches of Violin Schools. Later, violinists like Joseph Gingold and Ivan Galamian, emigrated to the US and there established the American Violin School.

YES School of Music directors studied under André Gertler, a famous musician, pedagogue, violinist and Hungarian, who was a pupil of Jenő Hubay. The directors aspire in the long-term to establish an Irish-Hungarian School of Violin instruction in Ireland, continuing the traditions established throughout Europe by their distinguished predecessors.

## Benefits of the YES approach

The YES School of Music believes strongly in the importance of starting musical instruction at a very young age —preferably pre-kindergarten— because it provides a unique opportunity to structure the child's mind and develop the tactile, audio and visual senses on a one to one basis with the instructor. At younger ages essential techniques and learning frameworks may be established more easily. These benefit both musical progress and the child's overall development.

The School sets high standards and believes strongly in the importance of structured, disciplined work. The study and practicing of a musical instrument develops motivation, self-control and confidence. The routine of having one to one lessons and performing in public from a very early age builds character.

The achievement of complicated tasks of co-ordination, focusing, listening and reacting to written music requires huge effort and goes far beyond what is normally expected of pre-school children. Yet, by accomplishing these musical tasks, the child also prepares him or herself to tackle academic work more efficiently. With more time left free to explore other interests and activities, a more well-rounded individual may result from the disciplined and focused study of a musical instrument.

All YES students are involved in ensemble performance and this activity assists in the development of important social skills. In addition to the enjoyment of making music together in an orchestra, students must collaborate; they must listen to, and hear each other. They also must compromise for the greater good and communicate clearly while developing a sense of individual responsibility and professionalism.

Whether they go on to become professional musicians or use the skills they have learned to succeed in other fields, YES aspires to instil a lifelong affinity for and enjoyment of classical music in all of its students. As the European Federation of Music Schools notes, "The ability to feel music and to express it expands a person's ability to experience themselves and the world around them."

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## The Kodály method

The YES School of Music bases its teaching methodology on the Kodály approach. Zoltán Kodály, a fellow Hungarian, declared more than eighty years ago that music “speaks to a dimension of the soul where no other communication can reach.”

To ensure that every child is able to partake in the possibility of universal “communication” he declared that every child should have the right to be “musically literate.” In Kodály’s understanding, this meant more than just being able to read music. He meant that the “inner ear” of the young child should be developed to be able to “hear” the score without the help of an instrument.

This is a very ambitious objective. The YES School of Music aspires to teach their students this ability through a combination of some of the basic precepts of Kodály and some of the more creative and interactive teaching methods that its founder, Maria Kelemen has developed over the years.

The relevant basic precepts of the Kodály approach to the YES teaching methodology are:

- That folk music of one’s own language and culture is the best music to use in teaching;
- That only music of undisputed quality, whether folk music or composed music, should be used in teaching;
- That music education, to be fully effective, must begin at a very early age.

## School goals

To offer a classical musical education which provides a life time of musical and intellectual growth.

To develop, through such an education, the artistic awareness, self-expression, self-growth, and multicultural sensibilities of the child, thus contributing to his/her full and harmonious development.

To expose pupils to the musical experience of generations of musicians enabling them to better understand the musical traditions and cultures of the past. To identify, encourage and nurture promising young musicians for whom music will be their chosen profession.

To provide a rigorous, high quality, challenging, primarily classical music curriculum which takes account of the abilities of each individual.

To provide opportunities for pupils to participate in festivals, workshops, master classes, both nationally and internationally, thereby improving and developing performance.

To continue to develop effective and innovative music education programmes through recruitment and retention of a body of teachers whose passion, philosophy and methodologies will reflect the ethos of the school.

To develop outreach and collaborative projects with other disciplines and schools of music at home and abroad allowing for an exchange of ideas, best practice and the formation of long term intercultural links.

To contribute to the cultural life of the community and State through concerts, recitals and musical productions of the highest integrity.

To establish a “Hungarian/Irish tradition” of instruction in Ireland which teaches a prescribed technique and method of learning a stringed instrument based on historic teaching principles originating in Hungary, and spreading throughout Europe and North America during the last century.



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## Principal instructors

### **Maria Kelemen: founder and director**

The School's founder and director, Maria Kelemen, was born and educated in Budapest, Hungary. In 1956, in the last year of her studies in the Béla Bartók Conservatorium, Maria left Hungary and became a stateless refugee in Belgium. There, in the Royal Conservatory of Brussels, under the guidance of André Gertler, himself a student of Jenő Hubay, she obtained First Prize Diplomas in both violin and viola. Her performance career, spanning thirty years, includes appearances worldwide as soloist, and as a member of the Amsterdam Kern Ensemble and the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra.

Together with Ronald Masin, she published the book "Violin Technique: The Natural Way" (Shar Press, 1982).

In 2005, Maria Kelemen received the "Officer of the Cross Order of Merit of the Republic of Hungary" from H.E. President of Hungary Dr. Ferenc Madl. President Mádl granted Ms Kelemen one of the highest Hungarian state awards in recognition of the latter's decade-long dedicated work and enthusiasm promoting Hungarian music and the Kodály-methodology abroad.

Maria instructs students in the School who are in the Junior Programme.

### **Ronald Masin: artistic director and conductor**

Born in Rotterdam of Czech-Dutch parentage, Ronald Masin started his violin studies at the Rotterdam Music Conservatory at the age of five. In 1962 he obtained his violin and chamber music diplomas from the Royal Music Conservatory of Brussels with the highest distinction. At the age of 25 he was offered the Leadership of the Amsterdam Philharmonic Orchestra where he stayed until 1984. In 1967 he formed a chamber music group, the Amsterdam Kern Ensemble, which during its eleven years of existence performed over 600 concerts in 22 countries, recorded for EMI and commissioned and performed a great number of works by contemporary composers.

From 1984 until 1986 he was Associate Professor and Head of the Strings Department and the University of Cape Town. From September 1987 to 2002 he was Senior Lecturer at the D.I.T. Conservatory of Music and Drama and a regular guest teacher at International Master Classes in Ireland and abroad. He is founder and artistic director of the Music Instrument Fund of Ireland.

Professor Masin instructs students in the Senior Programme at the School.

### **Martin Johnson: cello instructor**

Martin studied Cello under the direction of Anna Shuttleworth, a former student of Pablo Casals, Andrew Shulman, Principal Cello – Philharmonia, and the British Soloist Alexander Baillie. As a Soloist and Chamber musician, Martin has performed widely throughout Europe. His work as a member of the Fenice Piano Trio over the last decade has involved chamber music study with the Coull, Bochmann, Chilingirian and Brodsky String Quartets in the UK as well as the Takacs Piano Trio in Switzerland.

In 1997 Martin co-founded the Sussex Schools Chamber Music Scheme in the UK, of which he was a director and a tutor for several years. Since his graduation from the Royal College of Music, Martin has also tutored many pupils of all ages and grades, both in the UK and here in Ireland. At 24, he joined the RTE National Symphony Orchestra, where he is now the Principal Cellist.

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## **Principal instructors (continued)**

### **Shane McMahon: violin and viola instructor**

Shane McMahon studied viola with Ronald Masin at the YES School of Music. Since 2007 he has been assistant teacher to Maria Kelemen and now teaches students in the Junior and Intermediate violin and viola programme.

He also completed a PhD in historical musicology at the School of Music, University College Dublin which was fully funded by an Irish Research Council postgraduate scholarship (2010-2013).

### **Mihaly Magyarics: violin and viola instructor**

Born in Budapest in 1986, Mihaly started to play the violin when he was seven years old. After secondary school, he studied Musicology at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Budapest (2006-2011).

After graduating there he continued his research studies at the violin faculty, under the guidance of Prof. Mrs. Eszter Perényi, Mrs. Zsófia Járdányi, and Mr. Péter Somogyi.

### **Peter Dains and Lina Butorina-Kiva: piano accompanists**

## Section II: Practicalities

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### Admission procedure

The School accepts pupils from the age of 2½ years onwards. Prior to commencing at the school, prospective students must attend a short evaluation session with the director.

Private Instruction is divided into the Junior and Senior Programmes. The Junior Programme caters for the student at the initial stages of instruction who typically is not involved in workshops, public concerts, Feis Ceoil and other competitions or exams. Typically the term Junior Programme applies to students up to ABRSM Grade 5. The Senior Programme is designed for more advanced students and includes preparation for some or all of the above activities during the weekly lesson. Students are individually assessed at the beginning of each semester and assigned to either the Junior or Senior Programme accordingly. Most students at the School begin studying the violin. Some will then move on to the viola, cello or double bass. In certain instances, the director will recommend that a child start directly with the viola, cello and double bass depending on the child's own interests and the results of the evaluation session.

### Curriculum

Young European Strings School of Music follows a clearly structured syllabus from the very beginning of the instrumental studies, including preparation for competitions, up until the preparation for the ABRSM Teacher and Practical Solo Instrumental examinations. The syllabus includes theory, chamber music, ensemble and orchestral studies.

#### Private instrument instruction

- From ½ hour to 2 hours every week for advanced students.
- Students in the Junior Programme must be accompanied by a parent or guardian during their private lesson.
- Students in the Senior Programme attend lessons on their own.

#### Ensemble (orchestra) instruction

- Junior Orchestra: for beginners. ½ hour every week.
- Intermediate Orchestra: for intermediate students. 1 hour every week.
- Chamber Orchestra: for advanced students: 2½ hours every week.

#### Theory instruction

- From ½ to 1 hour every week.
- Theory classes are organised by the School up through the completion of the ABRSM Grade 5 theory curriculum and all students are required to attend the appropriate level of theory class as specified by their instructor.

Students of the School are presented for the Associated Board practical and theory exams on the recommendation of their teachers. To enable our students to achieve maximum results of their instrumental studies, music appreciation classes, theory classes until Grade 5 and orchestra classes are compulsory subjects, part of the syllabus. Chamber music and history of music are facultative.

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## School orchestras

Selection for participation in a School orchestra will be at the discretion of a child's music instructors and the orchestra directors, and will be based both on the child's musical progress and the needs of the ensemble group.

Selection for participation in an orchestra does not guarantee the right to perform with that orchestra. Public performance with a given YES orchestra will be determined by the student's ability to play the performance pieces with sufficient proficiency. Decisions regarding an individual's participation in public orchestra performances will be made solely by each orchestra's director.

## Fees

The School provides instruction in the following stringed instruments: violin, viola, cello and double bass. The parents are invoiced at the beginning of each term by the director. Fees must be paid in full before the first lesson of each term. Fees are broken down into segments of the curriculum, however, students are required to register for ALL segments under either the Junior or Senior Programme. Fees are not refundable.

## Term times

The YES School year is divided into two semesters, comprising approximately 40 lessons in total, depending on the weekdays of that particular year.

**Semester 1:** September to January.

**Semester 2:** February to June.



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## Practice time

The School expects a firm commitment to supervised practice from every student (and their parents). In order to progress on the instrument and develop the patience and discipline required to achieve the high standards set by the School, daily practice is essential.

In addition to the basic 1½ hours, or more, spent in classes at the School each week, Junior Programme students should allow time for supervised daily practice on their instrument as specified by their instructor. The recommended times will vary between 15 minutes every day for young beginners on up to 1½ + hours for older, intermediate players. Students in the Senior Programme do not require parental supervision and should expect to practice 2+ hours every day.

## Role of parents

The School believes that the involvement of parents is essential to a child's progress during the early years of learning a musical instrument. The School's Junior Programme requires a parent to attend lessons with his or her child and expects that parents will supervise practice at home to make sure that the teacher's instructions are followed correctly. Parent attendance is not required under the Advanced Programme.

Parents must, therefore, be prepared to make a significant commitment of time and effort independent of the formal instruction provided by the School. Properly structured, this can be enjoyable and rewarding for both parent and child as skills are mastered and results are achieved. Over the years, experience has shown that the diligent work of parents is clearly linked to the degree and pace of progress made by the students at the School.

## Performance

The School believes that performance is essential to music training. Correspondingly all YES students perform at private school recitals held once a term.

In addition, an end of year concert is held in the John Field Room of the National Concert Hall each May. During this concert, which is open to the general public, awards and cups are conferred to the students of YES, as an acknowledgment of their work throughout the year.

YES students also regularly participate in master classes organised by the School and represent the School at public concerts held by the Irish Association of Youth Orchestras (IAYO).

Advanced students compete several times a year at international performance competitions at various venues throughout Europe.

The School's orchestras are frequently invited to perform at cultural events, music festivals and state occasions during the year. Orchestra performances require the students to wear the uniform of the orchestra. Students are expected to be available for term-time concerts as the small size of the orchestras makes each individual's contribution significant. Notification of extra performance commitments is provided to students and parents as soon as possible.

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## **Selection for public performance**

In keeping with the School's ethos, all students have the opportunity for public performance with a School orchestra (at the discretion of the orchestra director as noted above). All Junior and Intermediate students have the opportunity to perform solo pieces at private school concerts and workshops during the year. Orchestra performances require the students to wear the uniform of the orchestra.

The selection of soloists at public concerts, whether at the annual prize-giving concert or at other public or private events, is at the discretion of the School's faculty and directors only. Criteria for selection are based on a student's merits, his or her specific pedagogical programme and the artistic requirements of the event.

Canvassing by parents is strictly not allowed. Decisions made by the School regarding solo performance are irrevocable.

## **Tours**

In previous years, students at the School have travelled with their instructors and parents to Finland, Spain, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Belgium, Austria and Switzerland. Past tours have proven extremely beneficial to students, broadening their experience, increasing their confidence and sparking their incentive to work even harder to achieve their goals. With the continued success of the touring programme, it is anticipated that an overseas tour will become a regular feature of the School.

Tours typically are organised to occur during school holidays and last between 5–7 days. Students perform at two or three public concerts in prestigious venues in the tour cities, and two or three private workshops are given by YES students to their colleagues at local music schools. Participation in the School tour is contingent upon musical standards attained by individual students. Participation will be at the discretion of the artistic director of the School.

Travel and accommodation costs are paid by parents with some fundraising, where possible, by the Parents Advisory Committee. When available, some funding towards the cost of transporting violoncelli and double bass is provided from Committee funds.

## **External examinations**

In consultation with their individual instructor, students at YES prepare for the Performance and Theory Examinations of the Associate Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM).

Advanced students may go on to obtain their teaching qualifications from ABRSM under the guidance of the School.

## **Festivals and competitions**

Students may only be entered for competitions or festivals on the recommendation of their instructor. All applications must be approved in writing by the director of the School.

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## Comments and complaints

A parent/guardian should in the first case speak with the tutor, in order to resolve the matter. In a case where the matter remains unresolved, the protocol within this school is that the parent or guardian should inform the directors in writing, requesting a meeting between the three parties.

In a case where a complaint is raised to a teacher but the resolution of the complaint is outside the remit of the tutor, the tutor will advise the parent that he/she will raise it to the School's director.

## Missed lessons

If you know that your child will be unable to attend a particular lesson, please give the instructor sufficient notice. Lost/missed lessons cannot be made up.

Where a teacher is absent due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances either a re-scheduled lesson will be offered or a deputy teacher will be engaged to take the lesson at the normal class time.

## Extended absences

Requests by students for extended absences in instances of gap years or transition years must be submitted to the directors in the semester prior to the semester in which the absence will commence.

## Illness

Cancellation of lessons due to illness must be notified to the teacher no later than 24 hours before the lesson. Ill students should not attend lessons. If an ill student attends, the teacher may decide not proceed with the lesson.

It is imperative that a student has prepared for the rescheduled lesson.

In cases of genuine and occasional illness, and where the requested notice has been given, the teacher will reschedule the lesson. The rescheduled lesson will be agreed between the teacher and the parent. It is imperative that a student has prepared for the rescheduled lesson.

**Lessons missed through illness are subject to a maximum of two replacement lessons per semester.**

## Discontinuing of lessons

If a parent decides to discontinue sending their child for lessons for personal reasons, fees will not be refunded.

## Exchanging lessons

Students may not exchange lesson times amongst each other.

## Section III: Governance and quality control

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### School governance

#### ADVISORY BOARD

The Advisory Board is comprised of internal and external individuals who oversee key policy and financial decisions of the school. The Board members agree to serve for a five year period.

Maria Kelemen and Ronald Masin also sit on the Board. The Advisory Board of the School meets at least twice annually. The Board operates in accordance with the YES Advisory Board constitution.

#### DAILY ADMINISTRATION

**Director:** The director of the School is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the School and coordination with school instructors.

**Staff:** Teaching staff will be appointed by the director of the School based on appropriate qualifications.

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## **Quality statement**

The School aims to provide the highest possible standard of classical music training and education to all students of the school.

The School will strive at all times to implement and maintain best educational practices in its classical music training.

It will ensure that clear and constructive evaluations of student performance and achievement occur both formally and informally throughout the year.

It will continually evaluate and revise communication methods with students and parents, to ensure that clear information regarding the school's objectives and expectations is received by parents, and that parent suggestions and concerns are regularly received by the School.

## **Quality monitoring**

The school shall request and review feedback from students/parents on teaching quality and incorporate results into revised teaching practice.

Students of the School will undertake external music exams to have their level of performance and achievement evaluated.

The School will respect the confidentiality of student performance whether internal or external.

## **Child Protection Policy**

The school's Child Protection Policy is available for download on the YES Web site, in the Resources -> Prospectus page.