



CONCERTGEBOUWORKEST YOUNG 2019-2022

'LIFE IN AND AFTER YOUNG'
FINAL REPORT

CONCERTGEBOUWORKEST YOUNG 2019 - 2022 'LIFE IN AND AFTER YOUNG'

FINAL REPORT

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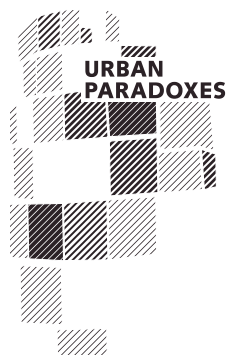




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SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Concertgebouworkest Young is the youth orchestra of the Koninklijk Concertgebouworkest. The first edition of Young, in 2019, kicked off a three-year pilot programme that aimed to:

- ▶ Provide access to a high-quality music programme for “hidden” talented youth.
- ▶ Support the musical, but also the social and personal development of the participating youth.
- ▶ Establish a community of active students and alumni who will inspire and help others through their music.

Connected to these aims are many elements to the Concertgebouworkest Young programme that make it unique and distinguish it from other (European) youth orchestras:

- ▶ Its target group of talented musicians between fourteen and seventeen years old;
- ▶ Its focus on including “hidden talent” and its multidimensional interpretation of hiddenness;
- ▶ The inclusion of seventy plus new talented musicians in each edition;
- ▶ Its pan-European reach (and beyond);
- ▶ Its two-and-a-half week long, intensive Summer School;
- ▶ The combination of a musical and social programme during the Summer School;
- ▶ The role of Young alumni as ambassadors for classical music (and the programme).

Below we present the results of our research into the three editions of Young, based on surveys, interviews and fieldwork undertaken during the Summer Schools. We end with a reflection on the future of Young and its position in the Concertgebouworkest as an organisation.

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RESULTS

The Concertgebouworkest Young team made progress towards all three aims:

OUTCOME 1

Young gave “hidden” talented youth access to a high-quality music programme

At the start of the programme, we established, in dialogue with the Young team, the various dimensions of hiddenness that impact a person’s career in the field of classical music that would be central to the evaluation:

1. The geographical dimension—e.g. does the young musician live close to quality musical education?
2. The economic conditions of the young musician’s family—e.g. can they afford quality education and instruments, transportation to music lesson/competitions, etc.?
3. The family’s cultural background and networks in the arts—e.g. do they know the field of classical music well enough to make strategic decisions and do they have helpful connections in this field?
4. The cultural (ethnic) background—e.g. does the family have a history of migration? This is of importance as not all ethnic communities encourage their young people to follow careers in Western classical music.
5. A miscellaneous dimension—e.g. does the young musician have previous orchestral experience, a helpful music teacher and self-confidence enough to succeed in the field of classical music?

On the basis of these dimensions, we constructed a ‘Hiddenness Index’ to calculate the level of hiddenness manifest in each group of participants. This allowed us to better understand how the separate



indicators of hiddenness that together explain the extent to which a person may be disadvantaged or underprivileged (hidden), combine in individual participants. The index intended to capture hiddenness as a multi-layered phenomenon in individual participants (intersectionality). The results from our analysis show that the Concertgebouworkest Young team, with the selection process it applied, was able to achieve its goals regarding the group of 'hidden talented individuals' it intended to reach:

- ▶ Of the 2019 group, 32 per cent scored above the average of hiddenness manifest in that year; in 2020-21 and 2022 this was 52 per cent and 53 per cent respectively.
- ▶ The Young team was able to increase the level of hiddenness of participants in the second edition of Young and roughly maintained that level in the third edition: The 2020-21 group is the most hidden group overall. This group differs statistically significantly from the 2019 group. The 2022 group is more similar to the 2020-21 group than to the 2019 group, but there is no significant difference between the 2022 group and the other two years.
- ▶ In 2020-21, the Young team was able to select and work with significantly more young talented individuals whose families had less cultural resources to navigate the field of classical music: there were no professional musicians in the families and/or the families lacked the networks in this field to contribute to the development of the musical career of their children. The mean of the family-networks dimension for the 2020-21 group differs statistically significantly from that of the 2019 group. Moreover, the participants of the last two editions were statistically significantly more hidden in economic terms than those of the first edition.
- ▶ Also, the geographic, miscellaneous and cultural dimensions played a role in the three years, although they applied to smaller parts of the groups of talented musicians. For instance, the cultural dimension played a role for, on average, 17 per cent of each group. In comparison, in 2020, circa 18 per cent of the total Dutch population between 0 and 25 years old was from a family with a history of (non-Western) migration. This percentage is higher for the major cities (circa 43% in Amsterdam in 2020).
- ▶ In spite of the increase in hiddenness from the first to the second edition of Young, there was no decrease in musical quality of the players. From the start of the programme, the Young team was able to prove that quality and equality are not mutually exclusive categories. Both reviews of Young in the media and Concertgebouworkest musicians involved in Young as teachers noted the high quality of the 2022 players and of the final concerts. Third party nominations and Young-alumni nominating candidates result in the 'right' group of applicants, or at least a 'diverse' group of applicants in the programme.

The breakdown of the dimensions of hiddenness into composite factors in the table below, shows that the Concertgebouworkest Young team was indeed able to engage talents in need of extra support due to identified disadvantages, and those underrepresented and from diverse backgrounds within Europe. Above all, it shows that the Young team was able to engage a highly diverse group of participants with more and less hidden talents during all three years. From a sociological point of view, a mixed group might be preferable to a homogenously hidden group. In a mixed group of participants, the young, talented individuals can learn how to deal with diversity, while those with fewer opportunities are likely to experience (future) upward mobility due to their newly acquired and diverse network.

Factors of hiddenness	2019 (N=73)	2020-21 (N=72)	2022 (N=73)
Gender	40 boys, 33 girls	33 boys, 39 girls	42 boys, 31 girls
<i>Geographical dimension</i>			
Living in rural / intermediate areas	49%	37%	36%
<i>Economic dimension</i>			
At least one parent / guardian in (un)skilled labour	34%	31%	27%
Participants indicating that their parents / guardians cannot afford professional music education	50%	54%	57%
Music lessons at a public institution only	63%	73%	71%
Quality of their instruments	16% rented instruments	61% low or medium quality	52% low or medium quality
<i>Family cultural background/networks dimension</i>			
Parent(s)/guardian(s) are not professional musicians	54%	70%	68%



No musicians in the extended family	58%	72%	62%
<i>Ethno-cultural dimension</i>			
Participants with a history of migration in their family	14%	18%	18%
Identifying with non-dominant groups (total)	27%	26%	22%
<i>Miscellaneous dimension</i>			
Participants indicating that their teacher is not helpful	13%	12%	9%
No previous orchestra experience	8%	0%	5%
No previous symphonic orchestra experience	n.a.	67%	69%
Less than 3 years of orchestra experience	41%	26%	30%
Not yet won a music prize	19%	23%	23%

The intersectionality (and variation) in factors explaining an individual's hiddenness, and the sensitivity of the required data, pose a constant challenge to the Young team. Conveying the meaning of "hidden talent" in a short, catchy and clear way, without scaring off future participants, continues to pose a challenge. The Young team must consider myriad factors including the importance of 'representation' and whether ethnicity may be just one element in a person's hiddenness, how to communicate these diverse hiddenness factors and how to deal with the limited information on the hiddenness of applicants.

OUTCOME 2

The participants' musical, social and personal development has been supported and improved

As talent alone is not enough to make it to the top, the Young programme also supports participants' social and personal development in order to help them in their musical careers. This support comes in the form of a social programme in collaboration with United World Colleges.

We conclude that progress was made towards aim 2 by supporting and improving the musical, social and personal skill development of participating young musicians. There is no significant difference in scores between the years, meaning that the outcome is simply very positive for all three years:

Self-evaluation of improvement as a consequence of attending Young (Summer School Survey)	Mean per skill set 2019 (N=73)	Mean per skill set 2021 (N=72)	Mean per skill set 2022 N=73)
Inspiration	4.61	4.55	4.60
Ensemble skills	4.48	4.50	4.38
Expressive and music skills	4.40	4.21	4.24
Social skills	4.15	4.07	4.18
Ambassadorial skills	4.12	4.17	4.34
Self-awareness	4.14	4.04	4.05
Diversity skills	3.78	3.84	4.03
Mental strength to deal with pressure or stress	3.77	3.66	3.88

We conclude that:

- ▶ Young Summer School helped the participants to improve all of the skills identified. And it did so to a tremendous degree. Even the lowest average score of improvement can be considered very high (3.66 out of five). Participants registered progress even on aspects of their social and personal skills where they already felt relatively secure (as indicated in the Baseline Survey).
- ▶ The ranking of the skills for which the participants registered the most and the least improvement is very similar for all years. The strongest impact was always on "inspiration" (not really a skill), followed by the musical skills. The participants register a greater impact on the improvement of their musical skills, than on their social skills. The lowest scores are attributed to the improvement of their skills to deal with stress, their diversity skills and their self-awareness. This means that for all groups the skills which they registered as 'less need to improve' in the Baseline Survey improved the most during the Summer School, and, vice versa, the skillset that they indicated needed to improve the most, improved the least.



- ▶ *These effects are not only measured at the end of the Summer Schools, but are longer-term effects.* The Final Survey that the 2019 and 2020-21 participants filled out in spring 2022 showed that 96 per cent of the alumni said they still experience an effect of Young Summer School on their development as a musician. Moreover, 89 per cent still experience an effect of Young Summer School on their social or personal development, and 60 per cent indicated that Young Summer School had a lasting effect on how they deal with difference and diversity in their everyday life.

Impact within the skills sets:

- ▶ *Regarding inspiration:* The participants were inspired by playing in the best concert halls and by working with the Concertgebouworkest teachers, the conductors and soloists. Inspiration also came by means of trying out a range of new things (playing in a symphonic orchestra, playing chamber music, discovering new repertoire, etc.).
- ▶ *Regarding the musical skills:* The biggest impact was on the ensemble skills of the participants, specifically their ability to blend their own sound with the sound of the orchestra and on their ability to play together and to listen to the others in the orchestra. The expressive music skills were also greatly improved. Here, the improvement on dynamics (playing softly, loudly, etc.) stands out.
- ▶ *Regarding the social and communications skills:* The most important social impact of Young is on new friendships and networks (this showed in interviews/observations, but was not explicitly addressed in the surveys). Shared passion for classical music and the sense of humour that comes with it, and being among like-minded peers, resulted in social euphoria and shared happiness that were palpable during, and after, the Summer Schools. There was also impact on the social and communication skills: participants felt safe to share their experiences and stories, and indicated that they improved their collaborative and foreign language skills, and learned how to receive feedback and use it to their advantage.
- ▶ *Regarding the diversity skills:* Though less than for the other skills, here too progress was registered in the Summer School Surveys by 65 to 75 per cent of the participants. Meeting and working together with so many young people from so many different backgrounds, cultures, and experiences, and operating in such a diverse context, might well have been one of the main reasons why the Summer School was such an unforgettable and inspirational experience for many of the participants, as the open answer questions in the surveys and our conversations with the participants revealed.
- ▶ *Regarding personal skills:* The participants registered growth in self-confidence as a consequence of attending the Summer School (this showed in interviews/observations, but was not explicitly addressed in the surveys). The two aspects of self-awareness that improved the most were the participants' ability to recognise and praise the qualities of others and their understanding that they can learn new things and improve themselves. Mental strength was the skill for which all groups registered the least improvement in the Summer School Surveys. But, progress was still made in this respect, above all, on the participants' acceptance that making mistakes is part of performing live.

OUTCOME 3

The participants are active as ambassadors

During the Summer Schools, and also in the online programme in 2020-21, the Concertgebouworkest Young-team aimed to stimulate ambassadorship in the participants in at least three ways:

- ▶ By supporting the participants in defining for themselves how they would like to shape their ambassadorship;
- ▶ By training them in practical ambassadorship skills (e.g. digital, teaching and site-specific concert skills);
- ▶ By offering inspiration and sharing examples of the work of socially-engaged, professional (classical) musicians.



We conclude that the Young team of the Concertgebouwkest made progress towards aim 3—establishing a community of active students who take up ambassador roles in their own neighbourhoods and countries. The programme effectively impacted the development of the participants' ambassadorship and resulted in a range of ambassador activities. The Summer School Surveys showed a very high percentage of participants who felt responsible for promoting Young and classical music on their return home – between 92 per cent and 95 per cent of the respondents agreed or agreed strongly with this statement. To support their ambassadorship, a large majority of participants indicated that they learned how to use their personal and musical qualities as an ambassador during the Summer School (between 79% and 92% agreed or agreed strongly). A slightly smaller, but still substantive, group of participants indicated that the Summer School workshops taught them new skills to do so (between 69% and 76% agreed or agreed strongly).

Number of ambassadorship activities per alumnus

The largest part of the 2019 participants (46%) organised two different ambassador activities, 31 per cent set up three or four activities, and 20 per cent one activity. Only 3 per cent said that they had not yet been active as ambassadors. That is, a small portion of the alumni did not do much in terms of ambassadorship (to some ambassadorship remained an abstract concept), a small portion was really (exceptionally) active and inventive, and the largest portion of the group moved around the mean—the average of 2.1 activities per person.

Most frequent ambassador activities

Almost all respondents mentioned that they 'spread the word' about classical music and Young by word-of-mouth, i.e., through talking to other young musicians, non-musician friends and other people back home. A large group of alumni posting on social media (between 69 % and 73% of the respondents), and many alumni (also) nominated potential candidates for the next edition of Young (between 44% and 46%). A fairly large group of alumni (also) taught music classes (between 25% and 37%), or organised concerts of classical music (between 32% and 36%).

The incentive for and the goals of ambassadorship

The participants are so crazy about classical music, playing their instruments and performing, that they want to share their passion with the world! But, the incentives to become ambassadors are greater than just their wish to share their love of music. They indicate that they also benefit (opportunities to play, exposure, etc.), that they want to 'save the future of classical music', and/or that they want to do something in return for being able to take part in Young (ambassadorship as an expression of gratitude).

Target groups / audiences for the ambassador activities

The majority of the alumni selected peers in their networks and other young people as targets for their ambassadorial teaching and/or audiences for their concerts. Additionally, several alumni mentioned bringing classical music to rural regions and 'deprived communities' where it is underrepresented as a cultural activity and/or where people may be prejudiced against it ('boring', 'just for old people', etc.). Some alumni were interested in performing with, or for, older generations. In each edition of the Summer School only a few other types of target group were mentioned, such as 'culturally diverse or socio-economically underprivileged groups', 'disadvantaged children', or people in hospitals and orphanages.

LIFE AFTER YOUNG

Of the 96 alumni from the 2019 and 2020-21 editions who filled out the Final Survey in spring 2022, only 6 per cent will or are already studying a topic *unrelated* to music. Of the remainder, 38 per cent are still in secondary school, but indicate that they will apply to study at a music conservatory afterwards. Another 56 per cent are already studying music at a conservatory or university. On the basis of the names of music conservatories mentioned by alumni, we can deduce that quite a few participants travelled abroad to study—The Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany and the USA were listed more frequently than the number of participants from these countries. This was confirmed in the interviews and the Young network.

Conservatories in the Netherlands especially (above all, those in Amsterdam, The Hague and Rotterdam) accepted many Young-alumni. This can be considered a 'Young-effect'. Asked if Concertgebouwkest Young had influenced their choice of conservatory, 56 per cent of alumni said 'no, it didn't'—they were studying at their conservatory or they had already decided before coming to Young. The 44 per cent of the alumni who indicated that Young influenced their choice gave several reasons: they said Young gave

them courage to audition for a foreign conservatory; they believed that it was the musical level they developed at Young that supported their acceptance; they were supported in their application to the conservatory by Young mentors, staff or peers; they met the teacher they wanted to study with through Young; or they became familiar with Amsterdam, The Netherlands and the level of Dutch music education and liked it as a result of Young!

It is interesting to observe that in the spring 2022 interviews with the Young alumni who were currently studying at (foreign) music conservatories, alumni perspectives on music and their working lives had diversified. While during Young almost all wanted to become professional musicians, preferably in top-of-the-bill orchestras, in spring 2022 there was a wider interest in styles and genres discernable, as well as a focus on a varied musical career.

The organisation of three editions of Young

From the start of the three-year pilot programme in 2019, the Concertgebouworkest Young team managed to set up a high-quality programme. This is acknowledged, time and again, by the participants and their parents, the professional musicians involved, and, occasionally, in reviews of Concertgebouworkest Young in international media.

We conclude that:

- ▶ The Young team of the Concertgebouworkest provided a high-quality music programme, the result of the 'high-quality' of the Young team (their professionalism).
- ▶ The team offered a high-quality programme, supported by top teachers and conductors, resulting in high-quality concerts at the end of the Summer Schools.
- ▶ Participants reported that the very capable and sociable Young team took excellent care of them and helped them in all possible ways.
- ▶ The Summer Schools were very well organised and the participants rated the various aspects of the Summer School very highly (programme, team, mentors, rehearsal location, etc., except for the food).
- ▶ The Young team is a learning team. Learning from its experiences in previous editions, the team implemented responsive changes in the next edition.
- ▶ The team showed great flexibility during Corona, drafting a quality online programme that kept the participants engaged and added positively to their experiences.
- ▶ The overall programme was effective and positively impacted the musical, social and ambassadorial development of the participants in all years.

After designing, preparing and executing the past three editions of Young, the processes and the organisation have become ever more streamlined and effective – offering a solid basis for the next three editions of Young. Simultaneously, it has become clear that keeping up this high-quality standard, demands a considerable time- and financial investment.

REFLECTION

The pilot programme ended with the third edition of Young in 2022, and so did our research. The Young programme will be extended for another three years, starting with the fourth edition in 2023. The lessons learned from the evaluation research will feed into a concise, practical evaluation tool kit that will support the Concertgebouworkest in monitoring and evaluating the impact of its future Young activities.

Young is successful and meaningful

Young is a unique, well organised and well received programme in the field of youth orchestras. The first three editions of Young were successful, in that they had a positive impact on the participants and on the cultural sector (conservatories for now, orchestras later?). Young might also be called 'meaningful'. It is both positive and important (a "good example") that a renowned institution like the Concertgebouworkest takes responsibility to address equity and equal opportunities, even though it cannot change

the sector on its own. It is meaningful because Young educates a new, 'different' generation of musicians and with them new, 'different' future audiences. Moreover, it can feed the debate on diversity and inclusion as it has shown (again) the importance of acknowledging intersectionality (rather than just cultural diversity). But, with this success come challenges:

The importance and challenge of supporting "hidden talents"

With the Young programme, the Concertgebouworkest is making a difference to the field of classical music and its participants. As this research indicates, the unique concept has a present impact on the participants and on the student population of European music conservatories (and beyond), while also contributing towards making orchestras more diverse in the future. Concertgebouworkest Young may make a difference in the arts sector as a whole by providing an example of how to successfully make the classical music sector more inclusive and by openly sharing the fundamental questions and struggles the Young team has encountered in the process. The challenges encountered with the notion of hiddenness during the selection process, and the limitations we acknowledged with regard to our Hiddenness Index, make one wonder if there is ever a way to know and gather all necessary information for a proper, 'just' selection of participants? How should the organisation deal effectively with hidden talent and the lack of information on the hiddenness of the applicants during the selection process?

But, even with its limitations, the Hiddenness Index that we built based on the factors and dimensions discerned by the Young team on the basis of their long-time experience in the classical music field, can be considered an improvement on studies of diversity or inclusion that focus on ethno-cultural diversity alone. In the Netherlands, the public and policy debate on inclusion is often dominated by and/or narrowed down to a debate about ethno-cultural diversity. The practical challenges, the outcomes of Young, and the limitations of our research can help question and problematise common notions of inclusion and privilege. Our research on Young shows how a person's hiddenness differs and is influenced by a range of factors. For most participants in Young, family background and networks and economic disadvantage played a—sometimes decisive—role. This became all the more apparent in the interviews on 'life after Young', during which several alumni shared that they had been accepted by Dutch music conservatories, but could not move to the Netherlands due to their family's financial situation. What should you do if you are selected to participate in Young as a "hidden talent", had a taster of what your future work life might be like during the Summer School and then find yourself unable to advance your career in the most effective way because of the very (economic) hiddenness you were selected for in the first place?

Urban Paradoxes will write an academic journal article on Young, on the way it addressed hiddenness, its results and the way we shaped our research in order to disseminate the insights to a wider audience and to reflect on how they could inform the general (Dutch) approach to inclusion and debate on privilege—aiming for the wider arts sector to become inclusive too. On the level of everyday practice, the outcomes of the research on Young raise questions that the Concertgebouworkest might want to debate internally. The orchestra took responsibility with Young to redress the balance, and to increase access for "hidden talents" to a career in the field of classical music. How far is the orchestra willing to stretch its responsibility if it turns out that after every edition of Young a few economically-hidden talents 'get stuck' due to financial reasons? Is it desirable to launch an emergency fund that offers scholarships to (or covers the tuition fee of) the most unfortunate cases? Might cultural funds or private or corporate sponsors of the Concertgebouworkest be willing to support a prolonged 'care' for equity and equal access to ensure that future orchestras are also socio-economically diverse? Would the growing group of alumni and their parents be willing to donate following their more-than-happy children's return home from Young Summer School with the amount to be decided by the families on the basis of their economic prowess? In what ways could present alumni and future participants be invited to donate to Concertgebouworkest Young, once they have reached a socio-economic position from which they themselves too can help support future generations of young hidden talented musicians?

How far, also, is the orchestra willing to stretch its responsibility with regard to the alumni of Young? How can it continue providing the support and the network that Young initiated? And, how far does the orchestra need to go (and can it go) to raise the percentage of both of Dutch participants (so far only 1 or 2 per edition) as well as the percentage of participants from families with a history of migration? Depending on which figure is taken as comparison, the on-average seventeen per cent of participants from non-dominant ethnic backgrounds can be read as 'not bad' or as 'not yet high enough'. At the same time, it can be said that in a youth orchestra that wants to redress the balance, the number of participants whose hiddenness is also informed by their ethno-cultural background should be higher.

The future of Young and its position in the Concertgebouworkest organisation

The success of a programme like Young manifests itself in the long-term, say from 10 years onwards, when the number of participants starts to make a real difference. Stop now, and the impact evaporates. Over the years, many great (pilot) programmes have been set up in the arts sector, and proven themselves successful, only to die out after a while. This mostly happens when funding runs out and funding bodies move on to supporting 'new, innovative initiatives', and when, at the same time, the initial programmes were not structurally embedded in the cultural organisation. Consequently, lots of the invested time and money were wasted as knowledge was gained and lost, and relationships and networks were built and then disintegrated. Moreover, many research projects have shown that programmes on equity and equal access results in a lot of cultural and social capital, but that the work it entails is time-consuming and results in little financial capital. These non-profit, but important tools in redressing the balance— such as programmes like Young—remain often reliant on ongoing, external financial support. Nonetheless, there may not be a future for successful programmes either, if they do not become part of the basic financial structure of the organisation.

At this moment, it seems likely that the Young programme will be extended for three years with external support. If the Concertgebouworkest's ambition with Young reaches beyond the next three editions, it will have to structurally embed Young in the Concertgebouworkest organisation and extend the organisation's narrative on inclusion. Note that many research projects have shown that:

- ▶ 'External' projects are doomed to fail/disappear: How can Young become a long-term 'programme', structurally funded and embedded within the (financial) organisation?
- ▶ Projects are doomed to fail/disappear when they reside with one member of staff: How to increase internal support, how to spread the workload and share responsibility for Young among members of staff?
- ▶ Projects are doomed to fail/disappear when they reside within one department: How to connect Young to all departments and aspects of the organisation (musicians, marketing, Academie, collaboration with Bijlmerparktheater, etc.)
- ▶ Projects are doomed to fail/disappear when they do not become part of the financial basis of organisation: how to make (public) funding bodies commit to Young (national and local 'cultuurplan'); reallocate budgets; attract long-term sponsorships, alumni-sponsorships, etc.?



INTRODUCTION

CONCERTGEBOUWORKEST YOUNG: A HIGH-QUALITY MUSIC AND SOCIAL PROGRAMME

Concertgebouworkest Young is the youth orchestra of the Concertgebouworkest. The first edition of Young, in 2019, kicked off a three-year pilot programme with the three intended outcomes:

- ▶ To provide access to a high-quality music programme for “hidden” talented youth.
- ▶ To support the musical, but also the social and personal development of the participating youth.
- ▶ To establish a community of active students and alumni who will inspire and help others through their music.

Connected to these outcomes are many elements of the Concertgebouworkest Young programme that make it unique and distinguish it from other (European) youth orchestras:

- ▶ Its target group of talented musicians between fourteen and seventeen years old;
- ▶ Its focus on including “hidden talent” and its multidimensional interpretation of hiddenness;
- ▶ The inclusion of seventy plus new talented musicians in each edition;
- ▶ Its pan-European reach (and beyond);
- ▶ Its two-and-a-half week long, intensive Summer School;
- ▶ The combination of a musical and social programme during the Summer School;
- ▶ The role of Young alumni as ambassadors for classical music (and the programme).

About this report

As a leading cultural institution engaging in a project that is both musical and social, and is aimed at young people, diversity and hidden talent, Concertgebouworkest Young may function as an example for other orchestras and classical music organisations across the globe. For this reason, the three-year Young programme is supported with evaluation research, conducted by the Amsterdam-based research agency Urban Paradoxes.

The evaluation research focuses on the extent to which the Young programme has been able to make progress towards the three abovementioned outcomes.

The report at hand is the Final Report in a series of research reports on Young and compares the first three editions of Young. Chapter 1 introduces Concertgebouworkest Young and offers an impression of the process and the Summer Schools. Chapter 2 analyses the extent to which the Concertgebouworkest was able to reach its target group (aim 1) and elaborates on the notion of ‘hiddenness’ to better understand the complexity and the interrelation of the various elements of hiddenness. Chapter 3 evaluates the learning experiences of the talented youth during the Young Summer Schools in Ede, The Netherlands (aim 2), and Chapter 4 zooms in on ambassadorship (aim 3). Chapter 5 returns to several participants from the first and second editions and illustrates ‘life after Young’ in a more qualitative manner through “portraits” of several alumni.

Research methodology

The research was based on a mixed-method approach. The more quantitative side consisted of systematic analyses of the application forms and of five types of surveys that were sent out a total of nine times: the Baseline Surveys that all participants filled out before the start of the Summer School (enquiring about the participants’ backgrounds and musical achievements so far); the Summer School Surveys that were filled out at the end of their stay in the Netherlands (enquiring about their learning experiences); the Medium-term Effect Survey filled out by the 2019-participants half a year after the Summer School (including an enquiry about their ambassador activities); the Retrospective Survey sent out to the 2020-21 group to evaluate the COVID-year and online programme; and the Final Survey that the 2019 and the 2020-21 participants filled out in spring 2022 (enquiring about the longer-term effects of Young on their musical, social, personal and ambassadorship skills).

Number of participants and responses to the surveys	2019 group	2020-21 group	2022 group
Total number of participants	73	72	73
Baseline Survey	73	69	72



Medium-term effect Survey (2019 participants only)	59	-	-
Retrospective Survey (2020-21 participants only)	-	66	-
Summer School Survey	73	71	73
Final Survey (2019 and 2020-21 participants only)	48	48	-

The qualitative side of the research consisted of observations during the Summer Schools. Our almost full-time presence during the Summer Schools allowed us to observe the musical and social interactions and the growth among participants. It also allowed us to attend and observe all the programme elements: the rehearsals, the social programme, free-time activities, and so on. Our constant presence also offered room for many informal conversations as well as for formal interviews with participants, staff, Concertgebouworkest teachers, conductors, trainers of United World Colleges and the mentors. Additionally, interviews with participants were held around the time the Medium-term Effect Survey (winter) and the Final Survey (spring) were sent out in order to obtain further details on the medium-term and longer-term effects of Young on the participants.

The data presented in the report are derived from the surveys. The quotes and portraits of the participants are based on their answers to open answer survey questions and/or the interviews with the alumni. For reasons of comparability, the methods of analyses were kept roughly the same throughout the years, but there was one significant difference. After a successful Young Summer School in 2019, and with the preparations for the 2020-edition in full swing (the selection was made and the young musicians already informed), the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent measures restricting mobility and social interaction, forced the Young team to cancel that year's edition of Young and postpone it to the summer of 2021. Thereupon, the Young team devised an online programme, in collaboration with United World Colleges, to keep the selected young musicians involved in Young in the meantime. Even though Covid-19 was far from gone, and a number of the restrictions were still effective, the Summer School took place in the summer of 2021. One can only imagine the stress for the Young team that must have come with coordinating the journeys of 72 young musicians from all over Europe to the Netherlands, carrying the responsibility for their health and wellbeing once there, and with the daily testing and all other efforts to keep the 'Young bubble' intact (that, nonetheless, at one moment seemed about to burst). To integrate the activities during the pandemic in the evaluation, we expanded the research set-up to include the online programme: we observed the Zoom-sessions and devised an additional survey that was sent to the participants shortly before the Summer of 2021.

The three-year pilot programme ended with the 2022 edition of Young, and so did the research by Urban Paradoxes. The Young programme will be extended for (at least) another three years, starting with the fourth edition in 2023. The lessons learned from the evaluation research will feed into a concise, practical evaluation tool kit that will support the capacity of the Concertgebouworkest to continue the monitoring and evaluation of the impact its future Young activities.



1 CONCERTGEBOUWORKEST YOUNG

1.1 WHY YOUNG?

The Concertgebouworkest launched Young after conducting an extensive inventory of existing youth orchestras and initiatives that address diversity and inclusion in the context of classical music. From this inventory, it became apparent that what might be missing was a European youth orchestra that represented the diversity of Europe and contributed to the development of "hidden" talented individuals between the ages of 14 and 17. This was the type of orchestra that the Concertgebouworkest intended to establish with Young. To address the practical set-up and organisation, the Concertgebouworkest sought inspiration from the National Youth Orchestra of the United States of America (NYO-USA), organised by Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute. Similar to the US experience, the Concertgebouworkest sought to extend the concept of "diversity on stage" beyond national identity, by taking an approach to inclusion and diversity that fits the social and cultural inequalities of the various European states. This means that even though the Concertgebouworkest did not apply selection quotas (as the diversity in individual European countries is too varied), the selection process led to a Concertgebouworkest Young that represented some of Europe's ethno-cultural diversity, and struck a balance between musical qualities and a lack of musical opportunities, which may result from (a combination of) social, cultural and economic factors in the personal and family backgrounds of the talented youth. It was also the lack of access to high-quality musical education and musical opportunities that the Concertgebouworkest intended to address with the notion of "hidden talent". Furthermore, and this is what set the Concertgebouworkest Young even further apart from other youth orchestras, the Concertgebouworkest aimed to work with the Young programme towards a representation of what diversity means as a value for Europe. This suggests that diversity on stage does not only mean bringing together young musicians from different backgrounds, but also striving for mutual collaboration and cohesiveness on stage. A social programme stimulating personal and social growth in the participants, developing a sense of community and preparing the participants to become ambassadors ("connectors", role models) was therefore integral to the Young Summer School programme. This social programme was designed and executed in collaboration with United World Colleges (UWC).

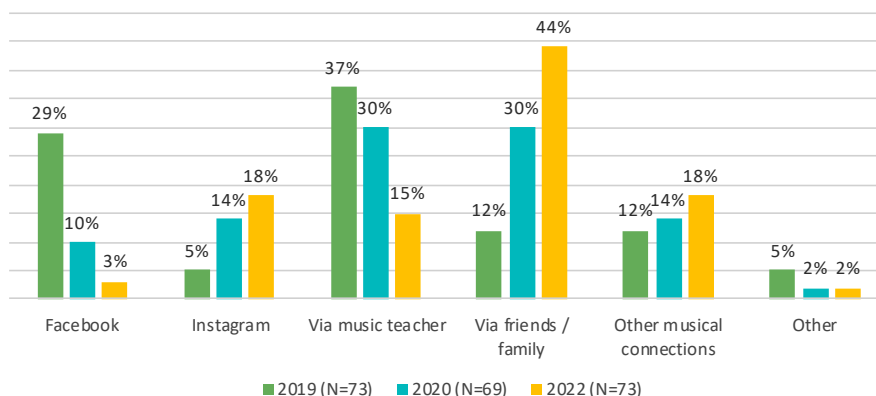
1.2 PUBLICITY AND VISIBILITY OF CONCERTGEBOUWORKEST YOUNG

As a top institution, the Concertgebouworkest acknowledges its own role as well as the importance of a broad foundation supporting talent development in classical music. That is why the Concertgebouworkest works with third-party nominations for Young. Nominators can include music teachers, conductors of local youth orchestras, and directors of local music schools. The Concertgebouworkest considers these (local) music teachers and educators important links in the chain of talent development: a message it wants to convey by taking these professionals seriously as nominators. Here too, the Young team built on the positive experiences with the selection process utilised by Carnegie Hall's NYO-USA initiative. This approach was effective for their American counterpart as hidden talent does not automatically find its way to orchestras such as NYO-USA or Young. The system of nominators works positively in other ways as well: someone who believes in a young musician supports him or her from the very start of the audition process. Obviously, by sharing information about Young in their networks, the nominators also help to increase the publicity, visibility and reach of Concertgebouworkest Young throughout Europe.

In 2019, to build a network of nominators, the Young team approached and established contacts at various levels. They contacted the "Side by Side" network that was built on the foundations of "RCO meets Europe". Contacts were made with El Sistema initiatives in Europe, such as "Side by Side" Gothenburg, El Sistema Greece and Superar in Austria/Switzerland as well as with the board of El Sistema Europe. These contacts shared the names of relevant initiatives and key figures in other European countries. Various national and European umbrella organisations were approached, such as the European Association for Music in Schools (EAS), the International Society for Music Education (ISME), the European String Teachers Association (ESTA), the European Music School Union (EMU), the Verband deutscher Musikschulen (VdM), Culture Connection (NL), and the European Federation of National Youth Orchestras (EFNYO). Obviously, the personal networks of the Concertgebouworkest musicians were also mobilised. A social media campaign (Facebook and Instagram) was set up to target each European country separately. Press conferences were arranged with international press, which generated a fair amount of media attention for the Young programme (especially in Spain).



HOW THEY FOUND OUT / HEARD ABOUT CONCERTGEBOUWORKEST YOUNG



The communication and social media strategy remained largely the same for the second and third edition of Young. An advantage starting with the second edition was that the alumni of Concertgebouworkest Young could function as ambassadors for the programme and could nominate candidates as well. The data shows that, in comparison to 2019, the role of the music teachers decreased through the years, whereas the role of the peer network increased tremendously. Friends in particular, and a few family members, drew the participants' attention to the programme, so did a smaller but nonetheless increasing number of other musical connections (e.g. peers of musical groups the participants are part of). Although the importance of Instagram as a medium of communication slowly grows, overall, the importance of social media diminished from a total of 34 per cent in 2019 to 21 per cent in 2022. Word of mouth (via friends, musical connections, and to a lesser extent, via teachers) seems to have become the main source of sharing information about Young.

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1.3 THE SELECTION PROCESS

The call for participants for the first edition of Young went out in Autumn 2018. At this point, the Young team conveyed the Concertgebouworkest's goals to the potential applicants: "We are looking for hidden young talented musicians who need some extra support and who preferably reflect the diversity of actual European society." The call was met with great enthusiasm and resulted in 323 applications. For the online application, the young musicians auditioned by uploading several videos illustrating various aspects of their musical prowess, a biographical statement, as well as a video in which they responded to one of three questions: What was your first musical experience? Who is your greatest example in music? What are your other interests besides music? A letter of recommendation from the applicant's nominator was also required.

The Young team, assisted by a committee of musicians from the Concertgebouworkest, selected 73 participants from the 323 applicants. In the process, two changes to the original selection plan were swiftly made. Firstly, the number of applications from European countries outside the European Union drove home the message that questions of access are not limited to, and are possibly even more pressing outside of, the European Union. As a pan-European youth orchestra would also be an addition to the landscape of youth orchestras in Europe, the initial idea to limit the selection to the 28 EU member states was abandoned. A second change pertained to the relationship between selecting "hidden talent" and the need to achieve a relatively high level of artistic quality. For the Young programme to be supported by the Concertgebouworkest and its sponsors for years to come, the Young team had to prove from the start that "equality" and "quality" are not mutually exclusive concepts. Taking this into account, a carefully composed group of young talents was selected from the widely diverse group of youngsters with varying degrees of access to high-quality musical education, and with higher and lower levels of proficiency on their instrument. Just like NYO-USA, the Young team aimed to strike the balance between musicianship, personal and geographical background characteristics, opportunities, and gender in the group as a whole. In years where there were a greater number of applicants than could be accommodated in a certain instrument section, additional non-musical indicators could more easily be considered in the selection process.

This selection process was also applied to the next two editions of Young. The only difference being the three questions asked in the application video. To obtain useful information about the applicants for

the selection process and to communicate the goals of the programme to potential participants, the applicants were now asked to reflect on the extent to which they believed they needed extra support, the extent to which they thought they were able to contribute to Young's diversity goal, and why they thought they would be a good ambassador of the Young programme and/or of classical music. This additional information on the need for extra support, diversity and ambassadorship was not considered in the selection process in 2020 as there were too few "high-quality" applicants for some of the instrument sections for non-musical indicators to be considered. In 2019 and 2022, answers to the questions and non-musical factors played a role in the selection.

Many young talents from the first group reapplied for Young 2020-21. The team appreciated their enthusiasm, but decided not to select them as they wanted to give the chance to experience the Summer School to as many talented young musicians as possible. In 2020, 72 'new' participants were selected from that year's 312 applicants. In 2022, 73 participants were selected from 263 applicants.

The number of boys and girls were not evenly distributed over the various instrument groups in all years. This is not so much a fault in the selection process, as a reflection of the general and prevalent overrepresentation of girls on strings and the underrepresentation of girls on wind and brass instruments. The participants are well aware of this uneven distribution. For instance, the 15-year-old, only female brass player in the 2022 orchestra thought "that has to change" when she started playing trumpet at a young age and joined an ensemble with only male players.

1.4 THE ONLINE PROGRAMME 2020-21

In 'normal' years, selection takes place in spring and the Summer School in August of the same year. The second edition was an exception to the rule due to consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, and this was therefore the only edition with a complementary online programme before the start of the Summer School. The programme consisted of online masterclasses and Zoom sessions with workshops by United World Colleges.

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A total of 428 masterclasses were given by the 35 musicians from the Concertgebouworkest who were involved in Young. The musicians were happy to be involved during the Covid-19-year as they had more time on their hands than usual—the orchestra was neither performing nor travelling. Whereas the 2019 participants had had the opportunity to have a one-on-one masterclass with members of the Concertgebouworkest during the Summer School, in the online programme, each participant was entitled to a maximum of eight online master classes. In these classes, the focus would often be placed on a piece the student was already working on in their music school or conservatory, but it could also be the piece(s) they were preparing for university auditions or for tests at their school of music. The experiences with the digital aspect of the masterclasses varied. Two main challenges appeared to be the quality of the internet connection and the quality of the sound over Zoom (either the tones in the high register did not get transmitted and/or the sound was distorted). This underlined once again the importance of good equipment. Good microphones and headsets are an investment not only for the Concertgebouworkest, but also for the young musicians because it is with this equipment that they will record the music they submit to audition for various conservatories.

Additionally, between September 2020 and February 2021, the Young team organised three Zoom sessions, in collaboration with United World Colleges, focused on personal growth (coping with stress and stage fright) and they offered tools to develop participant ambassadorship. Assignments were given in the sessions such as 'make a one-minute video presenting yourself' which were to be executed between sessions. In the February session, three videos of 2019 participants were shown as examples of ambassadorship and inspiration.

The Retrospective Survey sent out to the young musicians in July 2021, showed that 6 per cent took one and 94 per cent took more than one online masterclass (lesson) with a Concertgebouworkest musician. Participants rated the classes as enjoyable, calling it a "privilege" and a "great experience" to be able and allowed to work with "top-notch musicians" of an "outstanding orchestra". Additionally, almost all respondents mentioned that the classes helped them to improve their musical skills. Now that they already knew their teacher and some of the participants, and had seen what Young really was about (the level of playing, the expectations and the overall atmosphere), they also believed that the classes made them better prepared for the Summer School. Asked if they believed that the Concertgebouworkest should offer online classes to participants before the start of every future Young Summer School, the young musicians answered unanimously: YES!



Of the 66 young musicians that filled out the Retrospective Survey, 24 per cent attended one Zoom session, 62 per cent attended more than one session, and 14 per cent did not attend the sessions. Although the ratings of the Zoom sessions are slightly less positive than those of the masterclasses, the overall rating remains highly positive. Almost all the participants found the Zoom sessions enjoyable, and 60+ per cent indicated that the sessions gave them a better understanding of how they could grow as a person, deal with stress, and/or overcome anxiety (stage fright), or they felt motivated or more self-confident in leaving their comfort zones. Similar to the online masterclasses, participants stated that meeting those involved and being prepared for the Summer School through Zoom sessions was not only fun, but also reduced anxiety about the programme and traveling to the Netherlands. This, in combination with learning new things, made the Zoom sessions, in their opinion, highly recommendable for future editions of Young.

1.5 IMPRESSIONS OF THE YOUNG SUMMER SCHOOLS

The Summer Schools were held at the Akoesticum, a training centre for music, dance and theatre, in Ede, the Netherlands. They took place in August 2019, 2021 and 2022, and lasted two-and-a-half weeks. The first two weeks consisted of an intense musical and social programme, and the final three days prior to departure were reserved for concerts. In the tight Summer School schedule, the day would start at 9.30 a.m. at the latest, continued well into the evening and offered only one day off.

Musical programme

Most of the time was obviously dedicated to music. This alternated between instrument sectionals, chamber music trainings led by the Concertgebouworkest musicians and rehearsals with the entire orchestra (*tuttis*) led by a succession of conductors. As the added value of Young is that it offers the young musicians the opportunity to create and enjoy a collective musical experience, the musical training in these three elements of the musical programme placed strong emphasis on the improvement of the participants' collaborative musical skills. These skills included playing together and blending their sound with the sound of the orchestra or ensemble, allowing the participants to understand their own place and the place of others in the orchestra and ensuring that the quality of the performance was high on both an individual and a collective basis.

All editions of Young offered the participants a wonderful opportunity to work and play with well-known and respected figures in the field of classical music, from both within and beyond the Concertgebouworkest. Each year, Arndt Auhagen (Concertgebouworkest violinist) would lead the orchestra rehearsals during the first days of the Summer School, after which an 'assistant'-conductor would take over for one week – James Ross in 2019 and George Jackson in 2021 and 2022. They would in turn hand over the baton to the guest conductor who would also conduct the concerts: Pablo Heras-Casado in 2019, Daniel Harding in 2021, and Gustavo Gimeno in 2022. Two days before the first final concert, the soloist would join the rehearsals at the Akoesticum and later perform together with the Young orchestra in that year's selection of concert halls. In 2019, violinist Julian Rachlin joined the young musicians in Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E, op. 64. During the 2021 concerts, Paul Lewis featured on the piano for Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto. And in 2022, the Young orchestra performed Beethoven's Violin Concerto in D, op. 61 with violinist Isabelle Faust. The programme of the final concerts consisted of three pieces: a contemporary piece, the concerto piece with the soloist, and the concerts would end with a symphonic piece: Tchaikovsky's 5th Symphony in 2019, Brahms' 2nd Symphony in 2021, and Dvorak's 9th Symphony in 2022. In 2019, Detlev Glanert, the composer of that year's contemporary piece 'Idyllium', also joined the rehearsals to provide annotations and comments on the interpretation of his work. The same happened in 2022, when composer Francisco Coll was present to guide his contemporary piece 'Himnica'. In 2021, the youth orchestra played Jörg Widmann's 'Con brio', albeit in the absence of the composer. Each year, the final rehearsal for the concerts took place in Akoesticum, Ede, in front of an audience, and the first final concert was always at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, after which the orchestra went on tour to Brussels (2019, Flagey), Cologne (2021, Kölner Philharmonie) or Hamburg (2022, Elbphilharmonie). The concerts sold out in all years, although 2021 saw a smaller audience due to COVID-19 regulations.

Social programme

The Young team deemed the social aspect very important. Identifying the careful development of an integrated programme with music and social professionals as their biggest challenge, the team felt the need to collaborate with a social partner with expertise in this field. This partner is United World Colleges (UWC).

The social aspect of the programme sought to translate musical skills into social, diversity and self-awareness skills: to present the experience of playing together in the orchestra as a metaphor for a well-functioning society. Within this, the team aimed to show how collective values such as respect for differences, awareness of personal privileges and disadvantages, and a sense of togetherness, are important. Additionally, the social programme was focused on social dynamics, like creating a group out of 70+ individuals and channelling surplus energy (or tension) through games, personal encounters and moments for sharing. This was done with the aim to create more openness, to enhance the circumstances in which learning could take place, and in which the participants could feel at home in the group. To these ends, in between the musical activities, and over the course of the two-and-a-half weeks, UWC offered several two-hour workshops addressing various elements of the social goals of Young.

The first two UWC workshops focused on participants getting to know each other, and expressing and exploring personal expectations. These were followed by workshops that addressed aspects of personal growth with exercises about giving and receiving positive feedback and thinking about what mindset motivates people to continue improving their abilities and making changes in their lives. Within these workshops there was also room for sessions on mental health and dealing with stress as musicians. Other workshops centred around the so-called Island Game (allowing participants to experience effects of being dis/advantaged), or they were dedicated to ambassadorship, helping the participants understand what ambassadorship entails and to generate ideas for what they would like to do as ambassadors, as well as to acquire skills needed for this. The final workshops offered the participants time to reflect on their experiences in Young, supporting them to find ways that they might give these experiences a place on their return home, and on saying goodbye.

Having learned from their 2019 experiences, the Young team and UWC were able to adjust the content of the 2021 workshops to better fit the goals of the Young social programme. In 2019, every day, half an hour before dinner, UWC offered participants who felt the need for introspection, meditation, or simply for a moment of quiet away from the group, the opportunity to take "My Moment." As this did not bring the anticipated results and met with little interest from the participants, this element did not return in the later programmes. In the following editions, there was slightly more time in between the elements of the less packed programme, for the participants to take a moment for themselves to relax, hang out or study.

Alongside the workshops led by UWC trainers, a team of around eight mentors was present throughout each of the Summer Schools to guide the group and support individual participants' social and mental wellbeing if needed. The mentors would meet the participants at the airport and accompany them to Ede. They would keep an eye out for possible 'loners' (participants who connected less easily with the group), guide the social process (make sure everyone was on the bus on time with their instrument, in their own bed at night, and happy), and organise social activities, for instance on the day off. The mentors were always around and visible, so that the participants could approach them anytime they needed. They also led the Buddy Groups in which a small number of participants gathered to share with their buddies and mentor any issues that might have arisen. These groups also offered time to deepen the reflection on experiences gained in the UWC workshops or other activities, again, if necessary. Moreover, the Young team contracted a massage therapist to relieve the participants of the physical strain of playing their instruments. Based on the experiences with the 2019 orchestra, two work-out sessions were planned to look after the physical wellbeing of the 2020-21 participants. Some yoga and dance sessions were added spontaneously to the programme that year, when it became apparent that the participants were nonetheless suffering physical strain and, that among the mentors, there was a yoga teacher.

Ambassadorship and inspirational programme

Two of the United World Colleges workshops were explicitly dedicated to ambassadorship and focused on three aspects: defining ambassadorship, acquiring relevant skills and offering inspiring examples – with the aim of 'planting the seed' that there are many more ways to bring music to people than just by giving concerts in concert halls. Although these workshops directly addressed ambassadorship, other workshops supported this, for instance, when the UWC trainers worked with the participants on personal growth and stepping out of their comfort zone, and in the Island Game on privilege. The game aimed to make the participants aware of how differences in people's background may result in different opportunities in life, as well as of the difference people experience in access to playing an instrument and enjoying classical music. It queried what the participants could do with their music to engage these people more.



In assisting the participants to define ambassadorship, the workshops helped them to understand what it entails, and to generate ideas for what they would like to do as an ambassador. The training of relevant skills took various forms, focusing on skills such as 'digital', teaching and 'site-specific-concerts' skills. In the Summer School workshops, and in the Zoom sessions of the online programme in 2020-21, the UWC trainers offered the participants tools to develop their ambassadorship through digital means, and trained them in skills such as vlog-making, photography, 'storytelling' and video that could help them enhance their sharing of stories and experiences on, e.g. social media. One of the skills was also teaching. Through exchanges set up with local music schools, (a limited number of) participants had the opportunity to teach, to develop their teaching skills, but, above all, to experience whether or not they would enjoy teaching and would consider this part of their future role as professional musicians. In 2019, several participants were able to teach the pupils of the Waterland Music School. In 2021 no teaching or exchange with a local music school was possible because the Covid-19 social and mobility restrictions were still in place at the time of the Summer School. Fortunately, in 2022, all was more or less back to normal. This year, children of the Amsterdam-Zuidoost-based music school DGAJ came to Akoesticum to enjoy a music lesson with a Young participant. Moreover, the participants gained experience with site-specific concerts through outdoor chamber music concerts in Velp (a town close to Ede) and in the RCO House in Amsterdam. Also, on the programme in 2022 were concerts in two Amsterdam hospitals. These concerts offered the participants a brief sense of what it is like to play to and meet audience groups different than those in regular concert locations.

Inspiration for ambassadorship, and possibly for future work, also came in the shape of examples of the work of socially engaged (classical) musicians. In 2019, the Young orchestra performed the final concert in Brussels together with the multicultural, socially-challenged children of Singing Molenbeek and Equinox and performed the first piece together with them during the concert in Flagey. From this first edition it became apparent that the participants would be helped by more concrete examples, and that is why the Young-team was already preparing a range of examples of the different directions ambassadorship can take (on the programme were introductions to Musicians Without Borders, Shared Portals, and music therapy) for the 2020 edition when the Covid-19 pandemic struck. In the 'emergency online programme', they showed the videos of 2019 participants as inspirational examples instead –stimulating peer-to-peer learning. In one, four alumni from different countries talked about the string quartet they had established, and in another, a 2019 alumna gave an 'ambassadorship tutorial' on the basis of her experiences with the 'Tutti' ensemble she had set up. When the second Summer School finally took place in 2021, the participants were offered an inspirational session with two 'socially-conscious' musicians from Musician Without Borders (MWB). Since 1999, MWB has been a pioneer in employing music for peacebuilding and social change that engages with artists, social activists and communities worldwide. After the musicians introduced the goal and the vision of the organisation, they gave one workshop with djembe and one with singing providing a way for the young musicians to experience some of the five principles that are at the core of MWB: safety, inclusion, equality, creativity and quality. Above all, the workshops demonstrated ways in which one can work musically with people from non-musical backgrounds. That year, there was also a 'guerrilla visit' from the Ricciotti Ensemble that plays symphonic music, often unannounced, in public spaces, refugee reception centres, care homes, prisons, airplanes, and the like. The 2019 alumna mentioned above, was invited to work on site with the 2020-21 group as a conductor and to share more of her ambassador work. In 2022, inspiration was offered in a workshop by a harpist who works – alongside her professional music assignments – in orphanages, care homes for the elderly, in cancer wards and who assists disabled people in making music. Additionally, a workshop on teaching young children introduced the participants to ways of actively making music (sound, rhythm) with people who might have no previous experience in playing an instrument – somewhat similar to the workshop by Musicians Without Borders the year before.

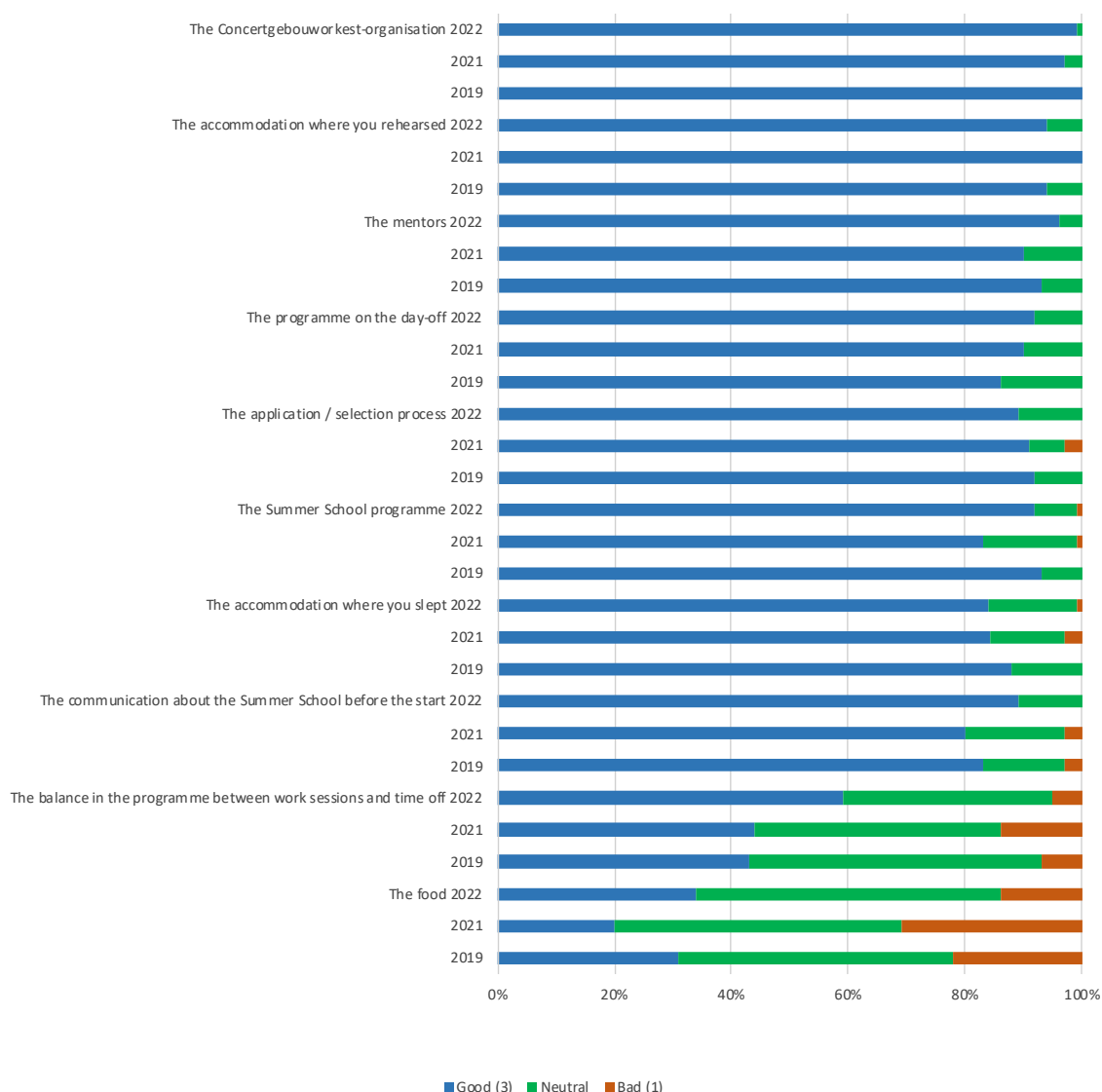
There was some variation in the programme between the years. For instance, the 2019 Young orchestra was visited by the NYO2 that had toured Europe that summer, visiting London, Edinburgh, Hamburg, Berlin and Amsterdam. This allowed them a "stop-over" in Ede to meet Concertgebouworkest Young, which was itself inspired by the set-up of NYO2 and shared, in part, the same (assistant) director, James Ross. The successful visit of NYO2 centred on peer learning and exchange. The preparations for the visit began the day before they arrived at the Akoesticum in Ede, with the Young participants preparing questions for their peers. In 2021, to keep mobility at a minimum during the COVID-19 pandemic, there were no visits by composers or youth orchestras, nor were there any pupils of a music school for the Young participants to teach.



1.6 HIGH-QUALITY ORGANISATION OF THE SUMMER SCHOOLS

After the three-year pilot, the Concertgebouworkest Young programme is now more refined, the musical and social programme finetuned and the balance of activities and time-off improved. Moreover, the preparation and organisation of the Summer Schools was, for the last edition, completed before the summer holidays started, giving the Young team the possibility to take a necessary break before the beginning of the super-intensive Summer School. Also, during the Summer School there are now less "surprises", as not only is the team more experienced, but also the Summer School's production schedule is more complete. Nonetheless, the preparation, organisation and execution of every edition of Young remains hugely time and cost intensive.

RATING ASPECTS OF THE SUMMER SCHOOL (in %)



The quality of the Young team, and the time and budget invested, resulted in a high-quality programme from the start. This is reflected in the outcomes of the annual Summer School Survey (see chart above), in which the participants were asked to rate various aspects of the Young Summer School, showing a very positive evaluation of the Summer School, the Concertgebouworkest organisation (including the Young team), the mentors, the Summer School programme and the accommodation where they rehearsed (Akoesticum, Ede). Every year, participants added comments like "the best" and "I love them so much, I'll never forget them" in the margin of the page next to where they rated the Young team and the mentors. The data matched the enthusiasm that was palpable among the participants –in the words of a 2019 participant (reflecting an experience expressed by many alumni since),

I really grew up musically, but also personally, in Young. The social experience was amazing, I made really good friends. One of the most important things I took from this programme was the social aspect and getting to know other people, and how important this is for the future. It was the best time in my life so far: to play in the Concertgebouw, to meet all the young people, we were all so different and after the programme I really thought that we are all just the same! And I want to complement the Concertgebouw-orkest Young team. The way they do it, is the best way to do it! The programme was amazing, including all the things you could not see – like the cleaning: every morning the rehearsal spaces would be clean and perfect again. But above all it was amazing how the team made us feel at home. I had flown only twice before coming to the Netherlands. But from the moment I set foot in the airport, they made me feel at home, and everyone was willing to help. Sometimes they took almost too much care of us, but I understand now that they could not give 73 minors more space and that there had to be rules and restrictions! It is so good to be in a programme like Young at such a young age. Because at that age the Concertgebouw-orkest and the Concertgebouw look so far away, unattainable, and then, you find yourself all of a sudden right in the middle of it! Everything is so good, so professional, in the beginning you feel really small, but then, at the end, you feel you have grown up three years in the three weeks the Summer School lasted!
(Timpanist, Spain, 2019 participant)

"Nothing compares to Young" was the answer of basically every participant we asked to compare their experience in Young to other summer schools they had attended. Or, as one parent wrote to the Young team after the 2021 Summer School,

The reason for contacting you is to thank you for the great opportunity that you have given my son and his companions to live this great experience. The gratitude goes beyond the musical. According to my son, the treatment has been exceptional, by the directors, all the teachers. Especially his sectional teacher we like to thank for his kindness, professionalism, sympathy and dedication. It is difficult to find such great people. Also thank all the mentors, the UWC staff, the organizing staff and especially Ms. Lili Schutte. We do not want to forget the episode experienced by the Covid issue, and the great professionalism that you have dealt with it. Undoubtedly, this is why the CONCERTGEBOUW ORCHESTRA is THE BEST ORCHESTRA IN THE WORLD (at least for us). Please send this email to all the people who have taken part in this project, since they all deserve our small recognition for their work and dedication. Whatever you need from our humble home, know that we are at your disposal.

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The high-quality organisation and programme, the great care the team and the mentors took of the young musicians, as well as the collaboration with dedicated professionals from the field of classical music also resulted in a high-quality musical outcome. The quality of the programme and of the final concerts was noted each year in reviews in the media. In 2022, the German papers mixed in a critical note, but the very positive reviews in the Dutch and Spanish papers stand out. The number of stars awarded to Young 2022 by the Dutch reviewers is exceptionally high, both compared to the average number of stars generally awarded to arts performances and to reviews of the earlier editions of Young.

It was clear before the interval that the concert was far too good to appeal only to grandparents, and then Dvorak was yet to come. ... They played it fervently, and with great success.
– NRC, Eva Peek, 19-8-2022 (4 stars)

Yes, there was the occasional horn player who put in a bar too early, and yes, in his enthusiasm a violinist in the back row let his bow bounce on the strings a nanosecond before the others. But what a great concert this was. Hopeful for classical music, and moving too. Because on the stage sat the Concertgebouw-orkest Young, made up of young people aged between 14 and 17 from 23 different countries. They played their passion with heart and soul, effortlessly getting the packed Concertgebouw off their seats.
– Trouw, Peter van der Lint, 20-8-2022 (5 stars)

Brilliant and generous initiative, admiring realisation, and effusive reception.
– Magazine Platea, Javier Pérez, 21-8-2022

1.7 PORTRAITS OF PROFESSIONALS INVOLVED IN YOUNG

Our conversations with the professionals involved in Young highlighted different aspects of the programme: the challenges and the strengths of the programme, as well as elements of hiddenness – oftentimes building on their own personal experiences.



JAMES ROSS

Guest conductor to Young in 2019, conductor of NYO-USA

In the NYO we are all from one country that we try to represent. They share one language. Diversity in NYO was first directed at getting young people from as many states as possible. It is usually between 34 and 38 of the 50 states that are represented in one year. Overall, all the states have been represented. In Young, young people from 27 countries meeting in the Netherlands, trying to make themselves understood in English, that is a melting pot, that makes it different from NYO.

So, we started off with diversity in geographical location in NYO, but then – with the whole question of who is playing classical music and who isn't – we needed to work out a different concept of diversity. So now the whole project looks for people who are from a background where we can make a difference in their life. In the selection process they have to sound good but we can't just take the best players because those may not be the ones who need this the most. In the NYO you have to be the best to get to one of the four wind spots, but in NYO2 we can consider a wider bunch of filters. We try to look at the whole unique young person and include the deeper levels of diversity: gender, ethnicity, cultures that need more support in classical music, and so on. But still, how do you compare a tuba player from Alabama – a woman, from a fairly well to do family, with a tuba player from El Paso – a Hispanic boy whose family does not know much about classical music, but who has some other advantages? If we go with ethnicity, gender, or financial means, we will compare applicants like this. If we go with the quality of their play, they may be totally equal. After seven years of doing so, it remains difficult; especially knowing that our decisions have the potential to change the lives of the people who are invited and of those who do not get to come, and that we base these decisions on only four minutes of information on each applicant.

Our job is to pick actual musical talents that might be a bit hidden and whose talent is not polished yet, but whose development we can help support. We try not to think in terms 'here we have an African-American woman from Oklahoma'. This might help classical music to a point, but not that person. They want to know that they got in because of their musicianship, not because of their skin colour. That seems obvious, but is not even always clear to those involved. For instance, I gave a really talented student the first horn in his freshman year. Older players did not see that he was more talented. All they saw was that he was the black kid getting the opportunities for being black. And they wanted to let him know that. The discussions we have in the room are interesting; it is in these moments that diversity and inclusion are worked out. We try to keep the conversation open, so nobody feels afraid of giving an opinion because someone else might consider it biased.

It feels like we are quite a mixed group. But when you look at the NYO now, there are more Asians that you would expect – some of the Asian kids have a harder time showing distinctive personality and that makes it harder for them to get in (university) orchestras. You will see a bunch of white people leading some sections. You will see a good number of African-Americans and Latinos. Some came through the NYO2 programme where we are more consciously trying to give support to Latinos and African-Americans.

GEORGE JACKSON

Guest conductor to Young 2021 and 2022

I decided to become a conductor when I was playing violin in an orchestra and felt inspired by the orchestra's conductor. Now that I am a conductor myself, I want to be that inspirational figure for young musicians. The Young participants should deliver the best concert possible according to their capacities, but the goal of Young is the process. Helping them experience what it is to be part of an orchestra. I can hear level differences between them, but that is not so important because we are looking for a collective sound and not a personal one. What matters most is that they get the collective experience to play with other musicians, as it is the collective experience what will make them better musicians. An orchestra is by nature a democratic social body because it teaches musicians that all of their roles are important, even if they have the shortest part, that of a piccolo flute. An orchestra teaches young musicians that they are all important because they all add something to the social body, just as in a society.

The added value of Young is that the young musicians change every year. That brings the opportunity to a broader group of musicians. I also like the format of Young, the intensity of three working weeks. That is another element that sets Young apart from other European or national youth orchestras, as does the focus on hidden talents. It all depends on your environment and how much opportunities you have in your town to be recognised as a talented musician. Talent development is also related to the possibilities that you get to be viewed and recognised and this is something that the Young programme can compensate for. The level is directly related to the socio-economic capacity of musicians; having a



good instrument makes a great difference. Sometimes the issues of the socio-economic background of musicians get confused with issues of diversity. For me it is an issue of not giving enough opportunities to children from socio-economic underprivileged backgrounds, because in countries as England diverse groups are not necessarily coming from these contexts and can afford a good education in music. The high tuition fees for music university and the very expensive youth orchestras programmes in England mean that also a lot of white, working-class English people cannot afford it. A main strength of Young is that it is free; everyone with talent gets a chance.

We may wish the orchestra world to be more diverse in 10-years' time, but we cannot force diversity into an orchestra without looking at the composition of the audiences. What part of society is interested in classical music? How is the music presented? How expensive are the tickets? Those are all mechanism of exclusion! In the US, there is a stronger realisation that if one lives and works in a multicultural society, one needs to work towards diverse audiences. You work for instance with Hispanic (Mexican) composers' programmes to draw in a Hispanic audience; there is no need to change or mix the repertoire in order to change audiences. With regard to increasing diversity among orchestra musicians, it should work as a meritocracy. Like in Young, people are here because of their talent. I am from a non-musical family, was a bit of the outsider in that respect. But I would not say that mine was a difficult path, I believe everybody struggles in one way or the other. That is not necessary about being privileged or not. If conservatories understand themselves as working in a meritocratic way, they should find ways to support real talents – like the Young-alumni that they selected to Dutch music conservatories, but who could not afford to come because of the high fees. But, even if you do not get into the best schools, you can still make it if you are really talented. But, we have to ask what 'making it' means? Reaching the very top or being able to make a living of music? You never do just one thing in your musical life; careers are always varied nowadays. Playing, teaching, conducting might all be one part of it. It is good to develop a multifaceted view on your future – as Young helps the participants to do. But, at the same time, at this young age, you need to be idealistic, focused on the top, that is necessary to continue the hard work.

MUSICIAN AND MUSIC EDUCATOR

Mentor to Young 2021 and 2022

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Talent can also be something ignorant. Not all musicians are good at explaining why they do something. Musician and teacher really are two different professions. Teaching is still looked down upon, and the dominant image of music education is often old-fashioned, even at the music conservatory. I wanted to find out whether I liked teaching, and how I could further develop music education, because I saw that children don't start taking music lessons of their own accord anymore. In the area where I now work, many cultural initiatives were cut back by the government, so there was room for innovation. I teach at primary schools in two villages and built a music society alongside that now holds 60 to 70 pupils, making sure that there is a place where pupils can continue taking music lessons after they leave primary school at the age of twelve. I notice that pupils who had 'Orchestra in the Classroom' lessons in grade 5, have more respect for music later on. In contrast, I see that because of the religious tradition that characterises in the area where I work, certain things are more difficult to realise, for example some parents object to boys and girls playing music together. That means that a talented student from one of these families will never make it to Young, because they are missing certain aspects of making music. As such it is not only the place where you grow up, and the musical offerings there, but religion can be a factor too when it comes to hidden talents.

Thinking about the Young participants as ambassadors for classical music, I would encourage them to think about what they can do for their peers, especially, so that they look at classical music differently later on in their lives. I would have them reflect even more deeply on what could inspire others, because playing beautifully in front of an audience is not necessarily the same as 'bringing inspiration'! I teach and I am active in professional music at the highest possible level. This is necessary to keep transferring the music, and to nurture yourself, otherwise your teaching flattens out, you will end up with no inspiration yourself. That is something that could be shared with the participants. That is something music conservatories should work on with their students too. Don't make them look down on teaching - if I tell professional musicians that I teach a lot, still nowadays, I fall in their esteem.

CONCERTGEBOUWORKEST MUSICIAN

Teacher in Young 2022

Asked about what she thinks of Young's goals –selecting people who can use some extra support and/or who represent diversity, she says, 'You want to reach people to keep the profession alive –full stop. Espe-



cially now that music education in Dutch schools is so scarce. You see it in Young and at Dutch conservatories: there are hardly any Dutch students. You have to work from the bottom up if you want people to move up on the musical ladder – ultimately to the Concertgebouw Orchestra as well. Another obstacle is financial. It is necessary to be well-off, because a professional bassoon is easily €50,000, an instrument for a beginner €10,000 to €20,000. If the instrument is not sponsored through crowdfunding or by a musical instrument fund, or if your music conservatory does not have one on loan, you get stuck. And if you finally made it through the conservatory with a good instrument, something is then wrong in the trajectory from being a young talent to the position many of them will eventually find themselves in, because only some can reach the top. But, can young people, such as those in Young, who currently have the top as their goal, already broaden their horizons? Maybe you have to throw yourself blindly into becoming the best you can be before you can open up to other things. I was also always only focused on the professional world, and teaching I did only at the conservatory—that is, focused on people who also aspired to the highest possible. Now that I have been working at the Concertgebouw for a while, I find that I am becoming more and more interested in teaching others. I notice that many colleagues do not have much to do with Young, and I had never really thought much about diversity myself either, but I increasingly see the importance of it. I feel increasingly encouraged to take responsibility for reaching the levels below the professionals by committing more often to activities from education, joining in school visits, et cetera.'

STUDENT OF MUSIC

Mentor to Young 2022

I started singing classical music at the age of sixteen. That is really late, but I quickly got accepted at music prep school, but, I knew so little still. During my bachelor at a conservatory in the south of the Netherlands, I developed a severe case of stage fright, partly because of the way teachers tried to stimulate us to be our best musical selves. I was recommended to continue studying in the UK, but I thought I would not be good enough for a master programme there. I auditioned nonetheless and four out of the six conservatories accepted me for a two-year master, some even with a scholarship. That was great, but the scholarships were not enough to cover the tuition fee of 22,500 pounds a year. Although I have a very good connection with my parents, and they have always supported me, that was too much money for me to be borrowing off them. I applied for support at various Dutch funds and was lucky to get the lion's share of the tuition fees covered. That is why it is great that Young as a programme is free of charge; everyone with talent can get a chance. But, I wonder if it is necessary to give the participants so many gadgets and if it would help when they paid a small, symbolic fee? Would they throw less food in the bin? Would they then say "Good morning, could you please help me?" rather than "I have a problem!" Is the care and the luxury they experience in Young, representative for the field of music?

In a way I am like some of the Young-sters. My story shows that you don't have to be from rich stock, and that you don't have to study at the most prestigious conservatory to progress. But, you do have to keep believing in your own talent. Five minutes before a performance I die of nerves, but very deep down I have a rock-solid confidence that I can do it. It is great that stage fright is not a taboo in Young and that a lot of attention is being paid to ways of dealing with this issue. This is not often the case at music conservatories and in the music world, where everyone pretends they are not bothered by anything.

Young is a special project at this age; 16-17-year-olds are now going to decide whether they want to continue in music. Some young people may be experiencing a summer school for the first time, they may experience homesickness, they have to find their way through two-and-a-half weeks in a group that is not always fun. This way, they can see if they really aspire to this intensive life in which they will be often away from home. If you want to get to the top, you need tunnel vision. But, you have to be realistic too: there are so few spots at the top. You need alternatives for when music-making doesn't work out as a career. The downside of talent is that you lose sight of other things because you were always practising. That is why it's good that in Young they get examples of other ways of making a living with music. Yes, planting the seed. I desire a career as a soloist on the big stages, but would also like to contribute to society—I used to conduct amateur choirs, but, I would also sing in care homes, for example. In concerts, I often sing a combination of more and less well-known music and I always make sure that some of it is work by a female composer. I will first try to make it to the top, but eventually or if my career does not take off, I want to work in the music educational system: see what is needed in bachelor and master programmes, or in summer schools, to get the best out of someone with the budget you have.

CONCERTGEBOUWORKEST MUSICIAN

Teacher to Young 2019-2022

Besides teaching in Young, I am also involved in the selection process. We look for diversity among the applicants. Diversity in all respects: countries of origin and the distribution of participants across Europe, ethno-cultural backgrounds, age, but also in musical level. We select people who are capable of reaching a better level, who are amenable to improvement and open to learning.

I teach them online, so they are better prepared, and it gives self-confidence before they arrive. Then during the Summer School in Ede, I teach them that apart from family and friends, music is a big part of their lives – in what they do, social contacts, dealing with each other. For me, the goal was always to become a soloist, but I said at 23 that I wanted to be in an orchestra so that I can also have a social life. The mission I always have when I teach is to open students' eyes to see what it does to them when they play a little better, as individuals and as a group, as musicians and as people. What it does to your life. If the participants notice that they are progressing step by step –musically, technically, ecstatically– that is also rewarding for me as their teacher. Music lessons should be constructive, with a trade-off between being strict and allowing room for humour; there is hard work to be done, but the joy of making music comes first. You want to adjust or improve your technique because you want that feeling. Young participants go home a different person. Many alumni have gone on in music. I think Young contributes to that. It helps them reach that level, it makes them see that their possibilities are wider than they thought, that they can go abroad to study. I come from a musical family; my mother practised hours a day with me from an early age. I myself had seen and played everything between the ages of six and twelve, the path was open to me, I did not have to find that path myself. For the Young participants much is new. These young people had to discovered the path by themselves and through Young they now have a network of their own.

After three years of Young, colleagues at the Concertgebouworkest see that it is serious. Young becomes more and more part of the orchestra as an organisation. The number of colleagues who teach and are involved in Young, is growing. The thing is that Young just takes place at such an awkward time, in the middle of the summer holidays. Maybe that is what holds colleagues back to get actively involved?



2 HIDDEN TALENTS IN CONCERTGEBOUWORKEST YOUNG

The Concertgebouworkest identified that not all the talented young musicians in Europe have equal chances to develop a successful career in classical music. Not all have the same opportunities to receive high-quality professional education, or to join an excellent symphony orchestra. Based on their experience in the world of professional orchestras and classical music, the Young team initiated the programme on the assumption that most professional orchestra members tend to be from middle or upper-class families, as they are most likely to provide financial and other types of support, such as access to the right networks needed for a successful career as a professional orchestra musician. Furthermore, their experience taught the Young team that at present, cultural and ethnic diversity that manifests *within* European countries is also underrepresented. One only has to take a quick look at the musicians of top orchestras around the world to ascertain that there is ample diversity when it comes to members' nationalities, but, what about diversity in their (minority) cultural identities or socio-economic backgrounds? We currently do not have access to information on orchestra members' cultural identities, nor on their socio-economic and class backgrounds, as it would be impertinent for an employer to register and publicly share this type of information about their musicians. This means that the outcome of Young with regard to hiddenness cannot be compared to the average composition of professional or other youth orchestras.

Assuming that the Young team's assessment of the field of classical music is correct, and that it is taking appropriate steps in redressing the balance of the number of musicians in orchestras from less-privileged families, and in the number of musicians representing the diversity evident in European countries, several new questions arise. How to obtain this information so that it can be considered in the application process? Does each participant have to be both in need of extra support due to his or her socio-economic background, and representative of diversity? Or, is it sufficient when such indicators of "hiddenness" are expressed at the group level? How to avoid running the risk – often present in programmes that want to increase diversity – that one has to "dissect" the applicants' identities and, before one knows it, begin favouring certain aspects over others? Identities are, after all, multi-layered, informed by, for instance, one's ethnic and religious background, sexual preference, cultural taste and life experiences, as well as by one's socio-economic background and education. Moreover, "hiddenness" related to a career in classical music is also influenced by non-identity factors such as having a supportive teacher who can help a young talent to find the way. Indeed, a young person's talent and musical experience are not always enough to successfully pursue a professional career in classical music at a high(er) level. Also, when they remain unnoticed by high-level youth orchestras or other top institutions that function as stepping stones in one's career, can they be considered "hidden talents" in Concertgebouworkest terminology?

This chapter explores the extent to which the Concertgebouworkest Young team has been able to achieve its goals regarding the group of "hidden" talented individuals it intended to reach (outcome 1). To do so, we first define the dimensions of hiddenness. Second, we introduce the Hiddenness Index that we constructed to capture hiddenness as a multi-layered concept and we explore the results. Thirdly, the portraits of the participants really drive home the intersectionality of the factors and dimensions of hiddenness.

2.1 HIDDENNESS AS A MULTI-LAYERED PHENOMENON

At the start of the programme, we established, in dialogue with the Young team, the various dimensions of hiddenness that impact a person's career in the field of classical music and that would be central to the evaluation research studying the Young programme's efficacy in reaching hidden talents:

1. The geographical dimension—e.g. does the young musician live close to quality musical education?
2. The socio-economic conditions of the young musician's family—e.g. can they afford quality education, instruments, transportation to music lesson/competitions, etc.?
3. The family's cultural background and networks in the arts—e.g. do they know the field of classical music well enough to make strategic decisions and do they have helpful connections in this field?



4. The cultural (ethnic) background—e.g. does the family have a history of migration? This is of importance as not all ethnic communities encourage their young people to follow careers in Western classical music.
5. A miscellaneous dimension—e.g. do the young musicians have previous orchestra experience, a helpful music teacher and self-confidence enough to succeed in the field of classical music?

In the course of the three-year pilot programme, the factors and dimensions that may influence one's chances of a successful career in classical music, were often reinforced and independently expressed by both the music professionals involved in Young (see the portraits in Chapter 1) and the participants. In the application format of the second and third editions of Young, the applicants were asked to reflect on why they would need extra support and how they would contribute to Young's goal of representing the diversity of Europe and within European countries. We analysed the responses to these questions from the 2020-21 group.

Although only 21 per cent of these participants indicated reasons why they could do with extra support given their circumstances, they mentioned similar factors. They said the country or (rural) area where they lived did not offer enough musical opportunities in general, or specifically for their instrument (trumpet, bassoon), they lacked the right connections and/or family support, and/or they lacked the financial means to afford an international (paid) music programme. They mentioned things like, *"The area where I live, does not offer a lot of musical projects."* or *"Young would open new doors. My family does not understand how important it is to leave the city to develop my skills as a musician. Portugal is isolated from the rest of the continent; there are not enough opportunities. I want to study abroad. My CV is not very big yet."* The vast majority of the 2020-21 participants simply stated that they saw the programme as a "great or unique opportunity" to develop their musical skills and musical confidence, to meet and learn from the best teachers and other young talented musicians. They stated that the experience would boost the advancement of a musical career. Two per cent of the 2020-21 participants honestly admitted that they already had had many opportunities so far, but that they would nonetheless still benefit from the experience in Young.

The 2020-21 participants were more outspoken about ways in which they thought they could help Young to become representative of the diversity of and within Europe, than about their socio-economic needs. Of the participants, 33 per cent understood themselves as representatives of their national or regional cultural traditions. They would say things like, *"because Poland is now part of the EU, I will be part of the first generation that will show the musical qualities of Polish women. I will bring colour to the sound of the orchestra with the tradition of Slavic singing."* Similarly, they would refer to the classical musical traditions of, for instance, Wales or Southern Spain. Almost 20 per cent of participants mentioned a bicultural background or double nationalities. The rest promoted themselves as the ideal participants for Young by pointing to their value systems: they were eager to learn, both socially and musically, from the intercultural exchange in Young (25%), they referred to the power of music to bring people together (15%), and/or they indicated that they respect and embrace difference (6%). As such, they could be understood to be part of a multicultural-minded group that might soon consider itself a minority in Europe, saying things like, *"I consider myself a citizen of the world – of a united world, not one with barriers or fences";* or *"I love music and I would love to know what music is like in other countries that might interpret it differently."*

2.2 THE HIDDENNESS INDEX

We constructed a 'Hiddenness Index' to calculate the level of hiddenness manifest in each group of participants and to better understand how the separate indicators of hiddenness that together explain the extent to which a person may be disadvantaged (hidden) combine in individual participants. In other words, the index was intended to capture hiddenness as a multi-layered phenomenon in individual participants (intersectionality). The application forms of the participants already offered us some information on some of the above-mentioned dimensions that can impede access to high-quality musical education and thus affect a young musician's opportunities for a professional career in classical music, such as their country and city of residence, and their nationality. To gain further insight, we designed a Baseline Survey that was sent out to the participants of each edition after they were formally accepted to the programme and before the start of the Summer School. The Baseline Survey contained questions on, for instance, the personal and family background of the participants and their musical achievements so far. By combining the data from the application forms and that from the Baseline Survey, we ended up with nine factors that together made up the five dimensions of hiddenness – see the table below. These factors and dimensions then formed the input for our index. The index does not consider the

talent –musical skills and qualities– of the participants, because, even though these skills vary to some degree, they all passed the quality threshold and were selected.

On the basis of the factors the Young team regarded important to make it in the world of classical music, we assigned different weightings (see the table for the factors, weights and dimensions). There were five factors we considered the most important (assigned more weight: 2.0 or 1.0) and four less important factors (assigned less weight: 0.5 or 0.25). After determining the weight of each factor, we assigned the highest possible score (most hidden), a fraction thereof (slightly hidden), or the lowest score of 0 (not hidden on this factor) to the answers from each participant.

	Geographic Dimension	Economic Dimension	Cultural/Ethnic Dimension	Family Dimension	Miscellaneous Dimension
Maximum weight = 2.0		Occupation Parents (max. 1.0 for each parent): Management positions, trained professionals=0,3 Support staff, civil servants, teachers=0,5 Skilled and other labourers, housemakers, unemployed=1,0			Assessment of factors aiding a successful career: Awareness of their talents=0.5 Supportive teacher=0.5 Parents with financial means=0.5 Social networks and connections to the musical field=0.5
Maximum weight = 1.0	Geographic location (access to quality music education): Urban=0 Semiurban=0,5 Rural=1,0		History of migration (diversity): No=0 Yes=1		Having been part of an orchestra (visibility to music institutions): Yes=0 No =1,0
Maximum weight = 0.5		Music lessons: Both=0 Private=0,25 Public=0,5 Quality of the instrument: High=0 Semi-pro=0,25 Amateur=0,5		Parents are professional musicians: Both=0 One=0,25 Neither one=0,5	
Maximum weight = 0.25				Any other family member is a musician Yes=0,25 No=0	
Maximum Total	1,0	3,0	1,0	0,75	3,0



With this aggregation of nine factors in five dimensions, the Hiddenness Index allows for the objective comparison of the backgrounds and experiences of all participants. As such, we strove for a Hiddenness Index with the following characteristics: measurable, objective, multidimensional, and weighed. The overall hiddenness score of a participant is the sum of the score of each of these nine weighed factors. This overall score is expressed as a percentage of the maximum possible score of 8,75 (i.e., the sum of the maximum score for each factor). The higher a participant's score on the Hiddenness Index, the more hidden the talent of the participant is likely to be. Scores gravitating towards 0 signify talent that is likely to be far less hidden, or not hidden at all.

We present these factors with some trepidation because not all factors are unambiguous. It remains to be seen to what extent the answers to the questions we added to our surveys gave the right kind of information to support our assumptions. For instance, the Young team considers it an important factor whether or not the parents are musicians, but we miss data on level and quality—are they musicians in an internationally renowned orchestra or music teachers at a (local) music school? The extent of their networks in the field of music will vary accordingly, but by how much is unknown to us. With reference to the question about where the participants currently attend music lessons, it is difficult to make a distinction between public and private lessons. Generally speaking, we could say that this is an indicator of hiddenness as in certain countries private institutions offer better quality education than public institutions, but are more expensive and therefore less accessible to some talented individuals. In other countries, public institutions or conservatories may be of high standard, although sometimes these may be limited to the capital and the country's prominent cities, leaving less significant cities with poor public musical services. Although the situation in European countries is too diverse to be entirely certain, we assumed that a person who takes lessons with a private teacher and at a music institution is the least hidden of all. Another example is the cultural-ethnic dimension. As we did not ask the participants directly about the history of migration in their families in the surveys, we most certainly must have missed this information for those participants that did not (want to) refer to their cultural affiliation in their answers to the open-answer survey questions. Moreover, not every family that has experienced migration at some point in their family history discourages their children from pursuing a career in Western classical music. Keeping this in mind, let us look at the results.

2.3 THE RESULTS OF THE HIDDENNESS INDEX

Overall hiddenness

Analysis of the results from the Hiddenness Index for the three editions of Young show that the 2020-21 group was the most hidden group overall. This group differed significantly, statistically, from the 2019 group (with a probability of a false conclusion of ≤ 5 per cent). The 2022 group was more similar to the 2020-21 group than to the 2019 group, but there was no significant difference between the 2022 group and the other two years. In short, the Concertgebouworkest Young team was able to increase the level of hiddenness in the second edition of Young and to roughly maintain that level in the third edition.

Descriptive Statistics Overall Hiddenness	2019	2020-21	2022
Mean	0.29	0.36	0.34
Maximum score of hiddenness (1=completely hidden)	0.77	0.63	0.80
Minimum score of hiddenness (0= completely not hidden)	0.00	0.14	0.03
Participants scoring above the mean (= more than average hidden)	32%	52%	53%

The table above illustrates this outcome in a different manner. It indicates that the 2020-21 group was most hidden, as it has the highest mean as well as a smaller discrepancy (i.e., difference in their situation) between the most and the least hidden talent (2020-21: 49%; 2019 and 2022: 77%), and between the most hidden talent and the average for the group (2020-21: 27%; 2019: 48%; 2022: 46%). The table also shows that the 2020-21 and 2022 groups were more similar to one another than to the 2019 group: their means are higher and lie close together, and in both years, a little over half of the participants scored above the mean and were thus more hidden than the average of their respective groups.

The hiddenness score on the dimensions

To better understand the overall hiddenness at the group level, we have to look at how the three groups



scored on the separate dimensions of hiddenness. The average scores (the means) are summarised in the table below.

Mean per dimension	Family and Networks	Economic	Geographic	Miscellaneous	Cultural	Overall Hiddenness
Young 2019	0.61	0.33	0.32	0.16	0.15	0.29
Young 2020-21	0.76	0.41	0.24	0.31	0.19	0.36
Young 2022	0.72	0.39	0.25	0.28	0.16	0.34

The table illustrates which dimensions added most to the overall hiddenness of the three groups. In 2019, the most important dimension of hiddenness was the family-network dimension (mean 0.61) followed by the economic (mean 0.33) and the geographic dimension (mean 0.32). This shows that in 2019 the Young team selected many talents whose families lacked both the cultural and the economic means to support the development of their child's talent, and who lived, more often, in rural areas. The miscellaneous dimension formed a (additional) factor for a smaller portion of the 2019 group. As such, the results seemed to indicate that in these cases family and economic limitations to the development of a professional career were compensated (at least to some extent) by experience of performing in orchestras, a helpful teacher and/or self-confidence. The cultural (history of migration) dimensions played a role for on average 17 per cent of the participants.

The 2020-21 and 2022 groups revealed fairly similar patterns in the ranking of the dimensions to the 2019 group. The main difference in ranking was that the miscellaneous dimension was stronger than the geographic dimension in the last two editions as more participants came from urban areas than those of the 2019 group. In the 2020-21 and 2022 group, the family dimension and the economic dimensions were again the most common indicators of hiddenness, but their prevalence was even greater than in 2019 (higher means). This means that even though the Young team selected more talents from urban areas for the 2021 and 2022 editions of Young, a larger group of participants came from families that lacked both the networks in classical music and the economic means to support the development of a professional career. This also seems to have been compensated for less by the talents' self-confidence in their ability to make it in the field of classical music, in spite of the fact that all 2020-21 participants had previous orchestra experience, and slightly more often helpful teachers than the first year's participants.

Within these patterns, we discerned a statistically significant difference in the family-networks and the economic dimensions between the three editions of Young. First, the mean of the family-networks dimension for the 2020-21 group differs statistically significantly from the mean of this dimension for the 2019 group (with a probability of a false conclusion of ≤ 10 per cent). This shows that in 2020-21, the Young team was able to select and work with significantly more young talented individuals whose families had less cultural resources to navigate the field of classical music: they were not professional musicians and/or lacked the networks in this field to contribute to the development of the musical career of their children. Second, the means of the economic dimension for the 2020-21 and of 2022 groups differ statistically significantly from that of the 2019 group (with a probability of a false conclusion of ≤ 1 per cent). This indicates that the participants of the last two editions were significantly more hidden in economic terms than those of the first edition.

2.4 ZOOMING IN ON THE DIMENSIONS OF HIDDENNESS

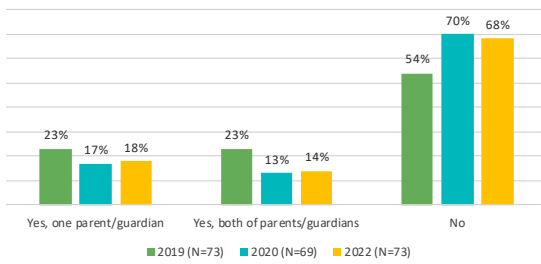
In this paragraph we zoom in on the five dimensions and their nine composite factors, by presenting the outcome of our systematic analysis of the application forms and the Baseline Surveys. Note that the 2020-data in the tables refer to '2020-21 participants'.

Family-network dimension

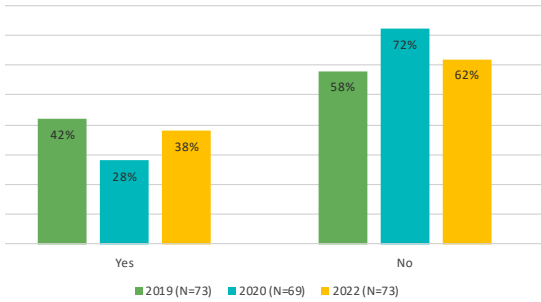
A family's cultural background and networks in the arts is an indicator of how well the participant's family knows the field of classical music. Do they know it well enough to make strategic decisions? Do they have helpful connections in this field? We measured this by querying the participants' parents' occupations (are they professional musicians?) and by assessing the occurrence of professional musicians in the extended family. In the Baseline Survey we asked the participants to describe their family backgrounds in terms of occupation.



PROFESSIONAL MUSICIANS AS PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S)



PROFESSIONAL MUSICIANS IN THE EXTENDED FAMILY

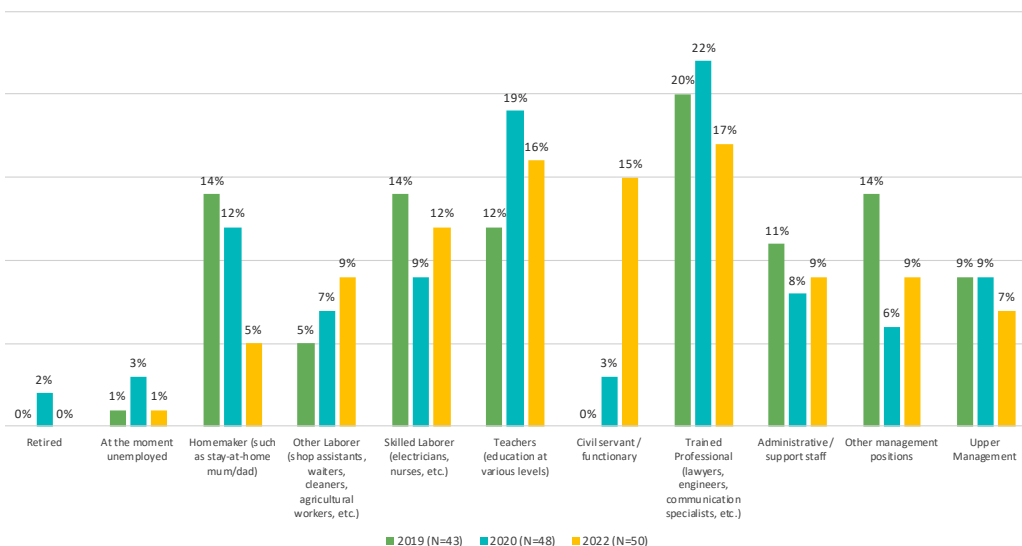


It appeared that the majority of the participants are from non-musician parents and the *majority* had no professional musicians in their extended families. The table shows that, in the successive years, between 32 per cent and 46 per cent of the participants had one or two parent(s)/guardian(s) who worked as a professional musician, and between 28 per cent and 42 per cent of the participants had professional musicians as, for example, a grandparent, uncle, aunt, or cousin. Therefore, we may presume, that the *minority* of the participants would have been familiar (from an early age) with the concept of playing music professionally.

Economic dimension

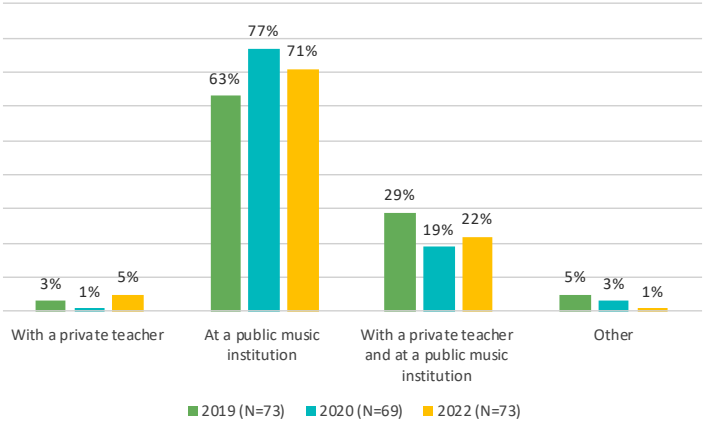
This dimension captures the socio-economic conditions of the young musician's family, and it enquires into the extent to which the families can afford quality education and instruments, transportation to music lesson/competitions, and so on. We asked the participants whose parents were *not* professional musicians to indicate what kind of work their parents or guardians do. We conclude that between 49 per cent and 55 per cent of the professions that the participants mentioned were higher and other managerial positions, trained professionals and teaching positions. This means that around half of the parents who are not musicians did not hold typical 'high cultural capital' positions as described in theories of cultural consumption (e.g. Bourdieu), but were employed as administrative staff, skilled or other labourers, were homemakers or unemployed. We understood this as a possible indicator of the socio-economic robustness of the families.

OCCUPATION PARENTS / GUARDIANS



In all three years, the Baseline Survey also enquired into the type of institution where the participants were currently taking music lessons, and the quality of their instrument as additional economic indicators. The data show that, with regard to the type of institution the participants were currently taking music lessons at, the majority of the participants took music lessons at a public institution only (between 63% and 73%), and only a few participants took classes with a private teacher only (between 1% and 5%).

WHERE THEY ARE TAKING MUSIC LESSONS



Acting on progressive insight, we changed the Baseline Survey question addressing quality of the instrument of the participants after the 2019 edition. We asked the 2020-21 and 2022 participants to indicate the level of quality of their instruments, rather than addressing if they owned or rented their instruments as this does not necessarily relate to the quality of the instrument. In 2019, 84 per cent owned and 16 per cent rented their instruments. Most of the 2020-21 participants rated the quality of their instruments as "medium or semi-professional" (58%) or as "high or professional" (39%). In 2022, the difference was less distinct between the group of participants rating their instrument as "medium or semi-professional" (49%) or as "high or professional" (48%). In both years, 3 per cent of the participants thought the quality of their instrument to be "low or amateur".

Geographic dimension

We deemed the geographical dimension important as it could tell us whether or not a young musician lives close to quality musical education. Our assumption here is that the more rurally one lives, the larger the distance to quality musical education. From the address details provided in the application forms we were able to distinguish between participants from rural, urban, and so-called intermediate areas. Here we followed the typology created by the Economic Commission to categorise territorial units in Europe.

Geographical location of the participants	Rural	Intermediate	Urban
2019	15	34	51
2020-21	10	27	63
2022	14	22	64

The results show that of the 2019 edition 49 per cent of the participants lived in rural or intermediate areas, for the last two editions these numbers were 37 and 36 per cent respectively.

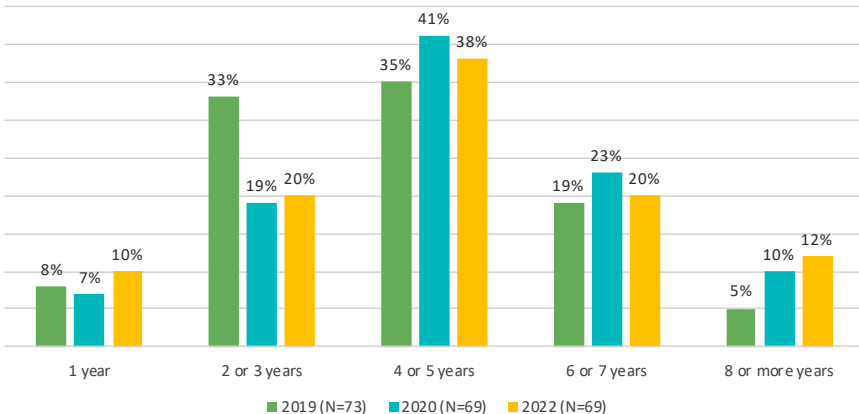
Miscellaneous dimension

With the miscellaneous dimension we captured a range of factors that may further aid a young musician's career in the field of classical music. We queried if the young musicians had previous orchestra experience, a helpful music teacher and self-confidence enough to succeed in the field of classical music? The Baseline Survey contained questions on musical achievement as an indicator of the exposure the participants had experienced so far (visibility). The participants showed a remarkable level of accom-



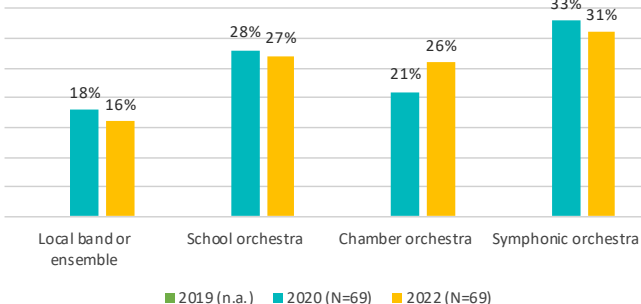
plishment for their age: almost all participants had previous orchestra experience (2019: 92%; 2020-21: 100%; 2022: 95%). All participants that were, or had been, playing in orchestras were then asked to indicate the number of years that they had done so. Not only did all the participants of the second edition have orchestra experience, they also had the most years of experience: 59 per cent of the 2019 participants and 74 per cent of the 2020-21 participants and 70 per cent of the 2022 participants had at least 4 years of experience.

NUMBER OF YEARS THEY WERE / HAD BEEN
PART OF A YOUTH ORCHESTRA



In the Baseline Survey sent out to the 2020-21 and 2022 groups, we additionally asked the participants to describe the type of orchestra they were part of. We can conclude that they were (or had been) part of more than one orchestra, as they listed a total of 178 and 161 orchestras, respectively. Among these orchestras, the symphonic orchestras and school orchestras ranked the highest. Note, however, that 18 per cent and 16 per cent, respectively, of the participants had only been part of a local band or ensemble.

TYPE OF ORCHESTRA THEY ARE /
HAVE BEEN PART OF



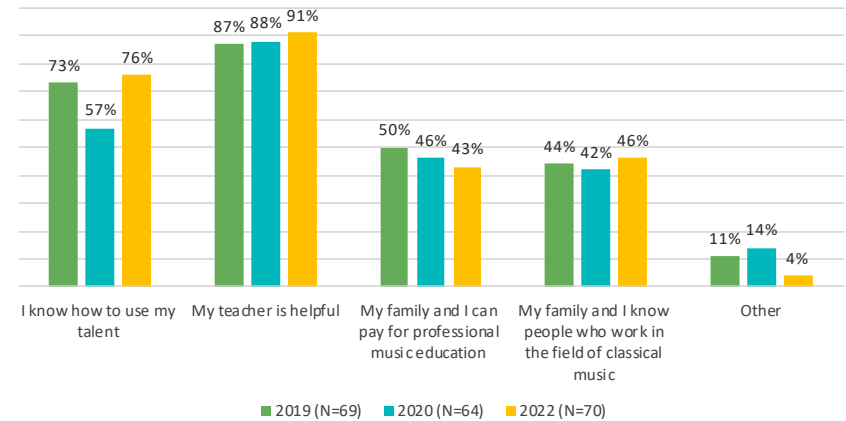
Additionally, the majority of the participants of the three editions had already won *more than one* music prize (between 62% and 70%) and several of them had won one music prize (between 10% and 15%). From the second edition onwards, we asked the participants to specify whether the most important prize they had won was a local, a national or an international music prize. Our results indicated that, while 2019 was the year with the largest group of participants who held more than one music prize, the 2022 edition held the largest group with an international music prize (2020-21: 39%; 2022: 64%).

The Baseline Survey further enquired into the participants' ambitions regarding music and playing an instrument, and how they viewed their chances of realising their ambition. In each edition, the vast majority of participants would have liked to become professional musicians (between 93% and 96%). We asked those who wanted to become professional musicians to indicate which of the factors that could enhance their chances of becoming professional musicians (see chart below), applied to their personal situation. In all groups, the vast majority of participants considered their teachers helpful. Besides the 2020-21 group, around three-quarters of the participants trusted their ability to use their own talent to advance their career in music. A far lower number of participants believed that the financial and net-



work support their families could offer would improve their chances of becoming a professional musician (between 42% and 50% in all years). The participants who (also) ticked the category “other factors”, conveyed the energy they were willing to invest to make sure they reach their goal. As one 2020-21 participant wrote, “*I work so hard every day to get the targets that I really want*”. Other participants mention their parents’ mental support: “*My family provides an adequate artistic atmosphere and is very supportive of my musical ambitions.*”

**FACTORS IMPROVING THE CHANCE OF BECOMING
A PROFESSIONAL MUSICIAN**



In turn, the very few participants who indicated that they did not want to work as professional musicians were asked to describe what they would like to do and what role they thought (classical) music would play in their lives. Four 2019 participants provided an answer, saying that they had not made up their minds about what they would like to become, but that they were sure that they “will always listen to classical music” or that playing their instrument would always remain “an important hobby”. In 2020, four participants also responded that they were thinking of working in the medical field, biochemistry, engineering or ICT. They too were certain that classical music would remain an important part of their lives and leisure time: “*I want to keep on playing the violin because it is one of my greatest passions*” and “*Classical music will always give me a break from work and the opportunity to meet new friends wherever I go!*” In 2022, one participant stated, “*I would like to become a clinical psychologist and help people through music.*”

Cultural-ethnic dimension

The cultural (ethnic) dimension refers to the cultural background of the participants. This is of importance as not all ethnic communities encourage their young people to follow careers in Western classical music. We looked at the country of residence, nationality and the history of migration of the participants’ families.

	Number of countries of residence	Number of nationalities	Number of participants who indicated a history of migration in their families (percentage of total group)	Number of participants identifying with group(s) other than the nationality of their country of residence, such as minority religious, ethno-cultural or other groups (percentage of total group)
2019	25	27	10 (14%)	20 (27%)
2020-21	25	25	13 (18%)	18 (26%)
2022	23	24	13 (18%)	16 (22%)

The countries of residence of the Young participants represented the European Union and beyond. Some countries had greater representation than others. All three editions had relatively large numbers of participants from Spain (20 - 17 - 14 participants, respectively) and Portugal (6 - 10 - 7 participants, respectively). Other countries that were represented by a larger number of participants were Italy, Poland, and Slovenia (5 or 6 participants per country), and, in some years, the Netherlands, Belgium, Hungary and Turkey with 4 participants per country. In 2019 and 2020-21 the Young orchestra offered 23 seats in total to Eastern-European musicians and 18 in 2022. Each edition of Young also welcomed young musicians



from outside the European Union, for example, from countries like Albania, Moldova, Russia, Turkey, the United States and South Africa.

The ranking that the Hiddenness Index gave the ten most overall hidden talents and the ten least overall hidden talents, made apparent (once again) that nationality is only a very limited indicator of hiddenness. Of the top 10 *most hidden* talents in 2019, five came from Spain. The overall the most hidden talent that year was Ukrainian. Among the ten most hidden 2020-21 talents, once again, the southern European countries were overrepresented, but the group comprised of different countries and the numbers also differed: three talents came from Portugal, two from Spain, and one from Italy. The overall most hidden talent in the 2020-21 group came from Ireland. Other talents in the 2020-21 top ten most hidden talents were from Sweden (No.3), the Netherlands (No.4) and South Africa (No.8). In 2022, the most hidden talent was Polish, who was accompanied in the top ten by talents from various Eastern European countries, as well as from Portugal, Spain and France. The eleventh most hidden talent was Norwegian. Contrastingly, Norway delivered the overall *least hidden* talents in 2019 and 2020-21. Young musicians from Spain, Italy and various Eastern European countries also featured among the annual top ten least hidden talents. In 2022, for example, the top two least hidden talents were Spanish, and they were accompanied in the top ten by among a Moldovan (No.3), an Italian (No.4), a Turkish (No.7) and a South-African talented young musician (No.9).

In addition to a large number of countries, the participants of Young represented even more nationalities: between 24 in 2022 and 27 nationalities in 2019. In all three editions, the Spanish nationality was the most common, followed by Portuguese, Italian, Slovenian and Polish. In each edition we noted that there were three to four participants for whom country of residence did not match the nationality they mentioned in their application form. At the same time, we were aware that multi-identification – including double nationalities or third-country residence – is increasingly common among the participants' generation. To be able to evaluate the extent to which Concertgebouworkest Young represents the diversity within European countries, as is one of its goals, we had to devise an additional strategy. We did not want to enquire directly into participants' family history of migration in the survey, as we considered that unethical. Instead, in the Baseline Survey, we offered the participants the possibility (the answer categories were 'yes', 'no', and 'I don't want to answer this question') to state their cultural and other affiliations beyond the formal nationality of the country they lived in. Those who answered 'yes' were invited to describe the additional group(s) they identified with in a follow-up text-box question. On the basis of the answers provided, we calculated the figures in the final two columns of the table above: between 14 per cent and 18 per cent of the participants' families had a history of migration, and, overall, between 22 and 27 per cent of the participants identified with non-dominant groups in their countries of residence (including cultural-ethnic groups).

The majority of the participants who identified with other groups in society referred to other nationalities or cultural identities. For instance, one 2020-21 participant who lives in the Netherlands mentioned: *"My parents were born in Iraq and they are Kurdish, so I identify myself with the Kurds"*. Double cultural identities came in many varieties, some examples of the 2022 orchestra: South Korean-Hungarian, Peruvian-Spanish, Venezuelan-Spanish, Russian-Spanish, Romanian-Spanish, Cape Verdian-Portuguese, Senegalese-Italian, British-Polish, Latvian-Swedish, Chinese-British and so on (the second nationality mentioned corresponds with the country of residence). An example of third-country residence was offered by a 2020-21 Young participant who described himself as 'German-Welsh, living in the Netherlands'. In every edition, however, there were also a few participants who only mentioned a religion as an additional marker of their identity. In 2019 a few participants explicitly pointed towards their multi-layered identities or identified as "multicultural-minded": *"I'm half Russian, a Catholic, a fan of Valencia Football Club and many other things"* and *"The people I identify with are almost all from different backgrounds and different religions."* Moreover, one 2020-21 participant identified with the people from an app group and another one mentioned various symphonic orchestras and musical genres.

2.5 PORTRAITS ILLUSTRATING INTERSECTIONALITY IN INDIVIDUALS

The analysis of the hiddenness data illustrated that even if the scores of "overall hiddenness" are fairly similar for two participants, the "composition" of their hiddenness is not necessarily the same. For instance, in 2019, the second most hidden talent (overall score = 0.60) was strongly informed by the economic (0.86) and family (1.00) dimension, and to a lesser extent by the geographical and miscellaneous dimensions (both 0.50). This indicates that this talented individual had little economic and network support from his family, lived in an intermediate area in Portugal, and had less self-confidence than the average talent in his year. Contrastingly, number three on the 2019 list of most hidden talents (overall

score = 0.54) had a score of 'just' 0.25 on the economic dimension. Her hiddenness was more strongly influenced by her score on the geographical dimension (1.00) in addition to a relatively high score on the family dimension (0.67). Coming from rural Sweden, from a family that lacked networks in classical music, and with less self-confidence than the average talent, the economic position of the family could not compensate for her hiddenness.

A further illustration of the intersectionality of the family-network, economic, geographical, miscellaneous, and cultural-ethnic dimensions of hiddenness in individuals, is provided by the short portraits below that we constructed on the basis of our interviews with several participants from each edition.

TRUMPETIST, LEBANON / SWITZERLAND

2019 participant

This young talent was born in Lebanon to a Lebanese father and a Swiss mother. Before coming to Young, he believed he could use some help advancing a career in classical music. He explains that he knows how to use his talents to become a professional musician and that his teacher is helpful, his family can pay for professional music education and his family knows people who work in the field of classical music. However, he recalls growing up in Lebanon that he suffered under a restrictive cultural vision on music, in which becoming a musician was not regarded as a serious career. His father, teachers at school and others around him would point out that music can be a hobby, something with which you might even earn some money on the side, but as a career one should choose a "real" profession. He was advised to become a lawyer or a medical doctor.

One day at a family gathering, his Swiss uncle, who plays in the Sinfonieorchester Basel, heard him play his trumpet and encouraged his parents to take him to Switzerland. He was indeed able to relocate with his mother at the age of 11. Once in Switzerland, his uncle helped him access high-quality music education, and later on, convinced his colleague, the principal trumpeter, to teach his nephew privately in Lucerne. This young talent believes that the progress he was able to make in a few years in Switzerland, would have taken him 10 years to achieve in Lebanon. His story shows that both context and connections influence a young talented musician's chances to advance in classical music.

TROMBONIST, PORTUGAL

2020-21

This trombonist was at the top of the 2020-21 Hiddenness Index. He is from a small town close to Porto, and his parents, and their family before them, are farmers. His extended family grows kiwis, grapes and other fruits on farms around the town. He learned to play the trombone in the town band before entering the town's music school. This trombonist is part of a group of Portuguese Young alumni who all come from the same area around Porto and who all attend(ed) the same music school. There is no tuition fee for the school, but parents do need to pay for the instrument. "It is a very good music school in Portugal and Young is now well-known among the musicians and students there." Musicians from this school participated in every edition of the Young programme so far. One of the 2019 participants who also went to this school now studies at the music conservatory in Amsterdam. The 2020-21 trombonist took an online exam, and was accepted at the conservatory of Luzern, Switzerland. His parents were able to support him during the first year of his studies, but not beyond that. When we talked to him before his move to Luzern, he explained that he would have to look for a job, but that he had already found a room in Luzern for five-hundred euro a month.

VIOLINIST, SWEDEN and HORN PLAYER, NORWAY

2022

These two participants illustrate the geographical dimension in a different way from the trumpeter above. The first comes from a town in Western Sweden and scored a little above the mean on hiddenness. She was five years old when she started playing music at a public music school as an extracurricular activity. When she grew out of this, she started taking private lessons which she continued doing from the age of eight to ten years old. After 8th grade, she transitioned to a music gymnasium (secondary school) in Stockholm. Since then, she and her mother have travelled to Stockholm weekly, where they stay the week, and back home on weekends. In the meantime, her father takes care of her siblings at home. She has another two years to go and then she would like to study music somewhere in

Sweden. The 14-year-old Norwegian horn player comes from a town outside the city of Bergen and ranks among the most hidden talents of 2022. He started playing the cornet at the age of six in the school band, which his father conducted at that time. He switched to horn when he was eight years old and joined a big youth orchestra at the age of ten. Now he flies once a month from Bergen to Oslo, where he attends a weekend programme for talented youth and where he receives lessons from the principal hornist of the opera orchestra of Oslo.

VIOLINIST, THE NETHERLANDS

2020-21

The parents of this Dutch, Iraqi-born, musician came to the Netherlands as Kurdish refugees in the early 2000s. For him, his family's migration background has not really been an obstacle; nobody asked him about his origin at school, he learned to speak Dutch quickly and received good grades in secondary school. In the Netherlands, his parents had to study again to validate their licenses. His mother works now as a microbiologist and his father as an accountant. His aim is to study medicine as he believes that it will be difficult to make a living as a musician. Through Young he aimed to improve his technical skills, work on dynamics and play with more confidence. On a personal level, he wanted to become a better leader and more confident as he felt that he is sometimes too humble about his skills and talent and desired to change that.

VIOLINIST, THE NETHERLANDS

2022

This girl and her sister started playing in a youth orchestra in The Hague at a young age. After a few years they switched to a private teacher, because they were no longer satisfied with the teacher they had. It was the private teacher that 'pushed' the sisters to strive for a place at a music conservatory. Their parents went along with that suggestion and this violinist is currently in the final year of 'prep-school', a combined music and secondary school that prepares its pupils for music conservatory. Their father likes listening to classical music and sings in a choir, but neither one of their parents works as a professional musician. "It is a privilege to have parents who support you. And it is a privilege if your family has the financial means. I see many people my age whose instruments do not fit their playing level. Quality instruments are terribly expensive. My parents bought me a violin around seven years ago, but now I borrow one from the Dutch Fund for Musical Instruments (*Nederlands Muziekinstrumenten Fonds*)".

VIOLIST, LITHUANIA

2020-21

This violist was born in Lithuania's third largest city. She considers herself Russian, because her family is Russian and they speak Russian at home. Her father is a sailor and her mother a school teacher. She became interested in classical music after her grandfather took her to a concert when she was three. She began playing at the age of five and she attended music schools for her primary and secondary education. The tuition fees of the schools were very affordable, she said, despite the fact that neither one is a fully public institution. Before coming to Young, she once had the opportunity to play in a symphony orchestra. Her goal for Young was to really learn how to play in an orchestra. After she finishes school, she intends to attend a conservatory in Vilnius or in Bydgoszcz, Poland. She shared that "I am aware that one of my limitations is that I do not come from a family of musicians. I believe that musicians with connections can aspire to better conservatoriums and learn faster."

VIOLINIST, MOLDOVA

2022

This girl was one of the least hidden talents of the 2022 edition of Young. Her parents are professional musicians, violinists who played her Mozart, Tchaikovsky, as well as folk music, when she was still a baby. Most of her relatives are musicians too: "They meet up together to play and improvise." Her mother plays in a Moldovan symphony orchestra, her dad is a folk music conductor and her relatives play either classical or folk music. "That is how I developed musical pitch, although it was not perfect yet in the beginning."



She started violin lessons at the age of four, but the practice was too much for her. Around the age of seven, she went to a school that integrated a regular musical programme. Before coming to Young, she had not attended any summer schools or master classes, and Young is the first symphony orchestra she has played in. Her parents studied in 1990 during the time the USSR dissolved. "Those were hard times, but the music education was good. In Moldova, nowadays, music education is just average, I guess." When she finishes school in two years' time, she would like to go and study in Germany or the Netherlands as "Everyone is happy there".

ONE BASSOONIST AND TWO VIOLISTS, TURKEY

2022 participants

In a joint conversation, we talked with three of the four Turkish participants about classical music in Turkey. They explain that being Turkish means being Eastern and Western at the same time: there is a strong tradition of Turkish music that is enjoyed informally at parties and with friends and family, and there is a strong tradition of Western classical music. "But, that is more formal, you would dress up to go to a concert of classical music." They see a young audience for classical music in Turkey: "As opposed to in Europe, it is the young people in Turkey who are the most affluent." They further explained that in public primary and secondary schools, children do not receive music lessons; in some private schools, like the one the female violist attended, they do. More than school, the family and the people you know are important. They will decide if a child gets music lessons and a classical music upbringing: "To improve and get on, family is everything in Turkey in general. Your chances are further dependent on your music teacher. If the teacher doesn't want you to grow, you won't." The female violist is not from a musical family but sang all day as a girl. Her dad saw that and brought her to a piano teacher. The teacher then told her dad to take her to a music school, and he did. "Later on, my mother advised me not to continue in music: 'You will never earn money. Better become a doctor', she said. She's is right: you are either the very best or you don't find a job at all in Turkey".

They continue to describe that in the major cities, like the city of Ankara where they are from, but also in Istanbul, there are a few good music conservatories and good (symphonic) orchestras. "Whatever one may think about Turkish politics, it doesn't have a negative effect on the arts. Many new concert halls were built. Now big names come to perform in Turkey". The music industry is also improving in Turkey, they observe, because people who studied music abroad come back to Turkey to work. "All Turkish music students aim to study in Germany! The level in Turkish conservatories is not the same as in Germany, the Netherland or Great Britain. This Summer School may help us to distinguish ourselves and to build a network." The bassoonist is one of the least hidden talents of the 2022 edition of Young: "My family is full of musicians. My dad plays in a state opera orchestra and my brother in an orchestra in Berlin. But going to the EU to study is a large step. It is expensive and the Turkish lira is not strong. Berlin would be a good place to start, because my brother is there, but for bassoon smaller southern German cities are more suitable". Would they go back to Turkey too after they would succeed in getting their education in Europe? "I'm not sure as it will be hard to find a job with one of the good orchestras. They already have seven bassoon players; when will they retire!? There are people waiting for a long time already to get in." The male violist adds, "I would consider going back to Turkey when someone I trust is for instance the principal of a conservatory and invites me to work with them, otherwise I may be kicked out any moment. Nepotism is one thing, and in general, the work situation in Turkey is very insecure."





3 YOUNG SUMMER SCHOOL: THE PARTICIPANTS' DEVELOPMENT

This chapter explores the extent to which the Concertgebouworkest Young team has been able to support the musical, but also the social and personal development of the participants in Young (outcome 2). To do so, this chapter evaluates the learning experiences of the participants in the Young Summer Schools. The data for this chapter is provided by the Summer School Surveys that the young musicians filled out at the end of their stay in the Netherlands in August 2019, 2021 and 2022. This survey took the form of a self-evaluation in which the participants scored their improvement on various musical, social and personal skills.

None of the groups' scores on the various skill clusters turned out to be significantly different, statistically, from those answers of any of the other groups. That means that the experiences of the Summer School were the same overall for the participants of the three editions. The small variations that occurred, and that we will point out below, are only minor and they do not indicate a deviation from the overall pattern. In addition to not finding any significant difference in development between the groups, neither did we find a significant relation (correlation) between the participants' degree of hiddenness and their development of the various skills sets.

Although we discerned between musical, social and personal development in this research, in everyday life these skills mutually reinforce each other and cannot really be separated. This cannot be done in general, and specifically not in Young with its integrated musical and social programme:

For me, the orchestra is a beautiful metaphor for creating good human beings who realise that they live in a complex world. Working on compositions with the orchestra brings up the same questions as they encounter in the UWC workshops. For me that is the compelling aspect of this project: The Concertgebouw-orkest does not just want to create the best sound for these kids, but, it is trying to find kids who they can invest in to be great artists and citizens of the future. (James Ross, Guest conductor 2019)

3.1 OVERALL DEVELOPMENT

The Baseline Survey and the Summer School Survey offer insight into the situation before and after participation. Unfortunately, the two datasets could not be linked as many participants failed to write their names on the Summer School Survey. Nonetheless, we can draw several general conclusions.

Self-evaluation of how well the participants had mastered the following skills before the start of Young	2019 Mean	2020/21 Mean	2020/21 Mean
My diversity skills – such as being able to get along and work together with people who are different	1.53	1.56	1.36
My expressive music skills	1.61	1.72	1.86
My social skills – such as the ability to get along with other people, working together with other people musically in a group, dealing with feedback, etc.	1.61	1.82	1.66
My musical ensemble skills	1.88	1.79	1.81
My self-awareness - being aware of my qualities, needs and limits, and being able to express them	1.97	2.15	1.95
My mental strength to deal with pressure or stress	2.01	2.58	2.19

In the Baseline Surveys we asked the participants to rate themselves on the statements of six skills set on a scale from 1 to 5. The lower the score the better they rated their skill; the higher the score the more they thought they could improve on this skill. All three groups ranked their skills in more or less the same order. All groups were *most* positive about their diversity skills, and they all were *least* positive about their mental strength to deal with pressure or stress, followed by their self-awareness. In both instances, the 2020-21 group stood out, expressing an even stronger belief than the participants of the other two editions that they could improve a great deal. The 2022 group specifically showed confidence in their di-

versity skills (less need to improve), but indicated the need to improve their expressive music skills more than the other groups.

The Summer School Surveys asked the participants to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a range of statements pertaining to the improvement of the same six skill sets that were discerned in the Baseline Surveys. The table below summarises the participants' self-assessment of the average improvement of each skill. The higher the mean, the more strongly the participants agreed that the Summer School helped them to improve on all of the elements specified for the specific skill (5=strongly agree).

Self-evaluation of improvement as a consequence of attending Young (Summer School Survey)	Mean per skill set 2019 (N=73)	Mean per skill set 2020-21 (N=72)	Mean per skill set 2022 (N=73)
Inspiration	4.61	4.55	4.60
Ensemble skills	4.48	4.50	4.38
Expressive and music skills	4.40	4.21	4.24
Social skills	4.15	4.07	4.18
Ambassadorial skills	4.12	4.17	4.34
Self-awareness	4.14	4.04	4.05
Diversity skills	3.78	3.84	4.03
Mental strength to deal with pressure or stress	3.77	3.66	3.88

Overall, we can conclude that the Young Summer School helped the participants to improve all of the skills mentioned. And it did so to a tremendous degree, that is to say, even the lowest average score of improvement can be considered very high (3.66 out of 5).

We also conclude that the ranking for the skills for which the participants registered the most and the least improvement is very similar for all years. Each year the strongest impact was on "inspiration" (not really a skill). In all years, the participants registered a greater impact on the improvement of their musical skills, than on their social skills. And the lowest scores are attributed for the improvement of their skills to deal with stress, their diversity skills and their self-awareness. For all groups, this means that the skills which they registered as 'less need to improve' in the Baseline Survey, improved the most during the Summer School, and, vice versa, the skillset that they indicated needed to improve the most, improved the least. Possibly, because their musical improvement could be more directly experienced at the end of the Summer School –they all knew how the orchestra sounded on the first day, and how differently it sounded at the final concert, while an effect on personal development may take longer to manifest.

In the sections below, we zoom in on the musical, social and personal development.

3.2 MUSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The Summer School Surveys contained various statements with which the participants could rate progress in their ensemble and expressive skills and the extent to which the Summer School offered them inspiration. As the table above showed, the scores on the improvement of the two types of music skills are high, and the overall strongest effect of the Summer School on the participants was the musical inspiration it offered them.

Ensemble skills

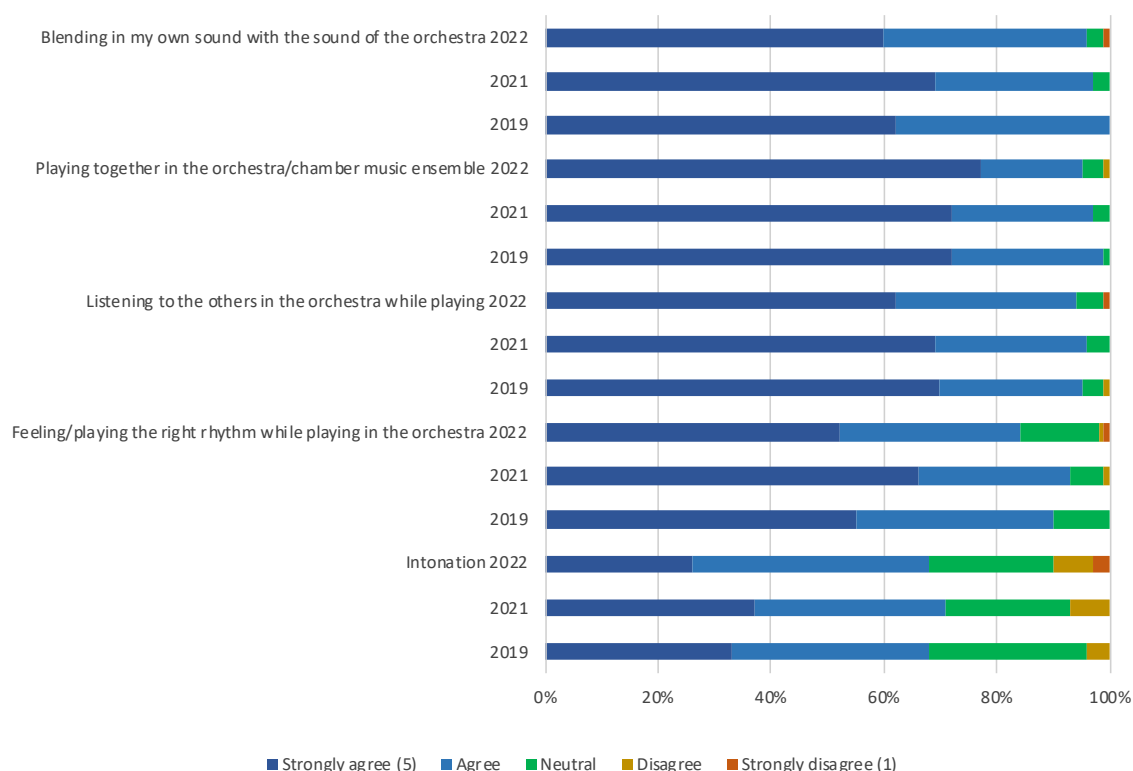
The work on ensemble skills started on day one of the Summer School with the rehearsal of the symphonic pieces, and continued throughout the two weeks in the tutti's (the orchestra rehearsals) with the conductors and in the sectionals and chamber music rehearsals led by the Concertgebouworkest teachers. In these musical elements, the conductors and the Concertgebouworkest teachers worked intensely on developing a sense of group identity and a collective sound in the orchestra and the chamber music groups. This can be difficult for young musicians looking for an individual identity and their own sound in music. Strong emphasis was put by the conductors and the Concertgebouworkest teachers on listening to each other and understanding the role of every instrument in the rhythm and in the melody, as well as on cooperation. This is important because many of the young people were used to practicing alone eighty per cent of the time. In the rehearsals, they had to learn how to play together, to relate to the others while playing and not just to play their own part.



Sometimes you are important and sometimes you are less important to the music. But in an orchestra what is really important is to fit in, no matter what your role is. Listen to each other! (Teacher Strings Ensemble, 2019)

The Summer School Surveys showed that with regard to these ensemble skills of the participants, a strong impact of all Summer Schools was on the participants' ability to blend their own sound in with the sound of the orchestra—between 96 and 100 per cent of the respondents agreed or agreed strongly with this statement. The Summer Schools had a similarly positive impact on the participants' ability to play together in an orchestra or chamber music ensemble—between 95 and 99 per cent of the participants agreed or agreed strongly with this statement. In all years, intonation was least affected. Nonetheless, between 68 and 71 per cent of the participants responded that the Summer School improved their abilities in this regard.

ENSEMBLE SKILLS (in %) The Summer School helped me to get more skilled in ...



We already met the Russian-Lithuanian participant in Chapter 2, but we spoke to her again some hours before the final concert in Cologne: "I am sad that the programme is almost finished, but now I can imagine how it is to play in an orchestra. I have learned that I don't need to be upset that the skills of others are better. They have more experience in playing with orchestras, and, in the end, I discovered that my skills improved a lot! I am better now at listening, watching others and collaborating. From playing Widmann, I have learned many techniques of playing my instrument that were new to me. And also, I have learned how to endure an intense rhythm of rehearsals and practice, but I would have appreciated more physical activity in between the sessions, to be energized like during the moments of yoga and dance offered by the mentors. Playing in the Concertgebouw was amazing; the building is so beautiful. My parents and teachers were able to watch the concert via Zoom. I could not believe that the audience kept applauding for 10 minutes. I would love to play in this concert hall again! (Violist, Lithuania, 2020-21 participant)

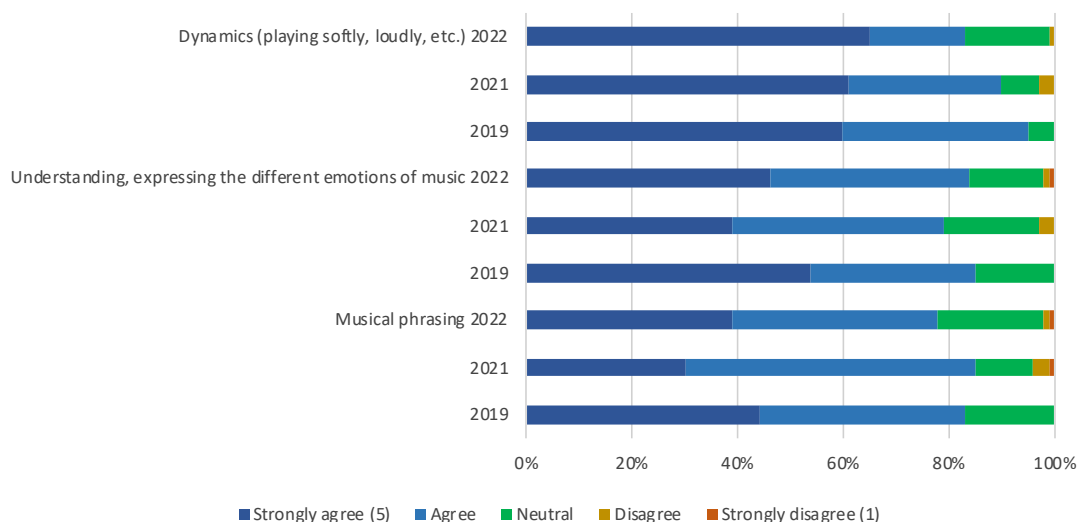
Expressive skills

In the rehearsals, the conductors and Concertgebouwworkest teachers additionally concentrated on the expressive music skills. For instance, they focused on improving the dynamics in conjunction with the articulation of the sound—trying to make it as clear and as clean as possible, but with character. The music professionals defined dynamics as a way to express emotions and interpret the composer's inten-

tions, and offered occasional visualisations such as “play it like you tell a story” or “like you were dancing” (Teacher Cello Sectional, 2019).

The Summer School Surveys contained statements regarding the participants’ improvement in dynamics, understanding and expressing the different emotions of music and phrasing. We can conclude overall that around 80 per cent of the participants believed that their expressive music skills improved greatly. Specifically, the improvement on dynamics (playing softly, loudly, etc.) stands out—between 83 and 95 per cent of the participants agreed or agreed strongly with this statement.

EXPRESSIVE MUSICAL SKILLS (in %) The Summer School helped me to get more skilled in ...



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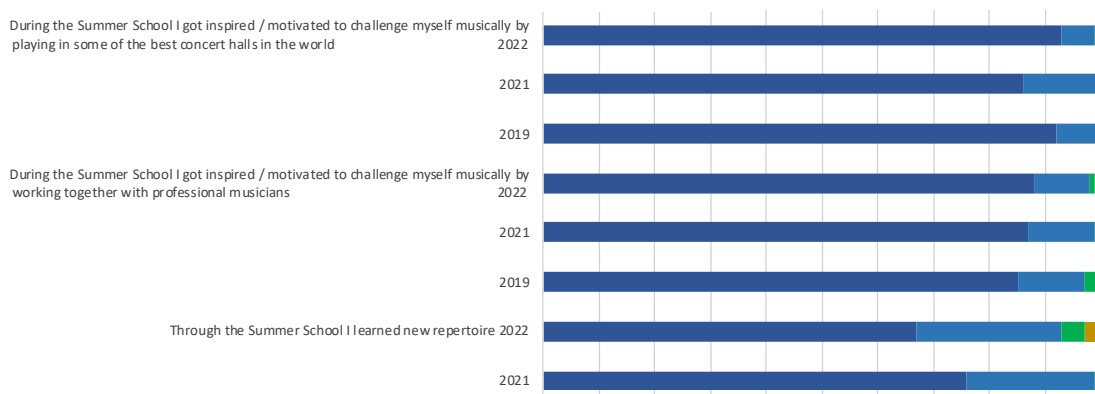
Inspiration

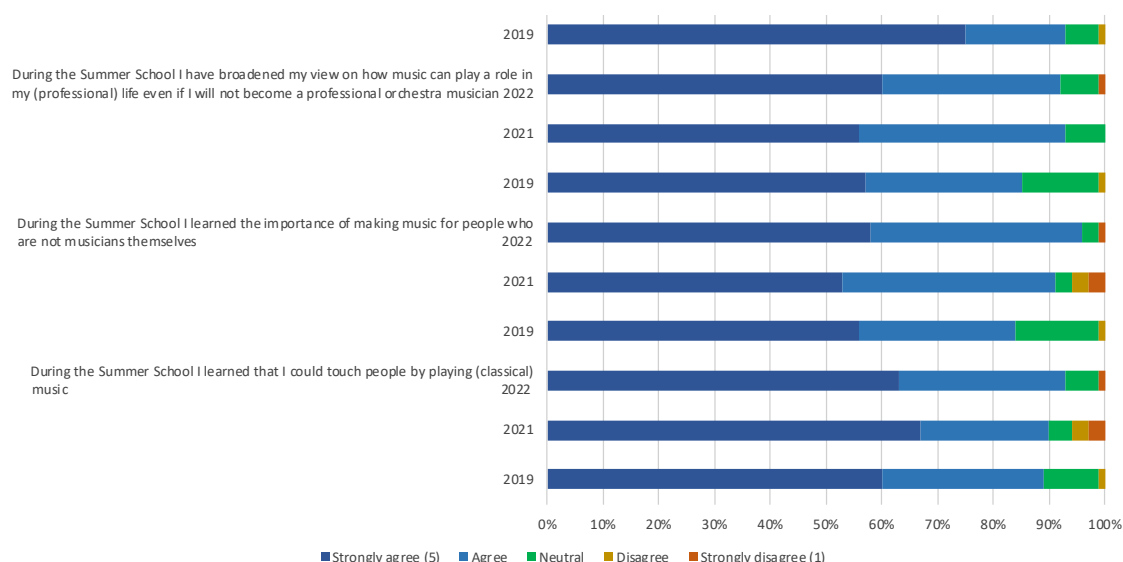
Even though inspiration cannot be considered a skill, one set of statements in the Summer School Survey addressed different ways in which the Summer School inspired the participants. This proved to be, without doubt, the strongest effect of the Summer School on the participants. The inspiration provided by Young was also visible to a parent of one of the participants who wrote the Young team after the 2021 Summer School – as it was undoubtedly to many more parents:

Our daughter told us a lot about the summer camp, she learned a lot and came back so enthusiastic and motivated to study and play more. For sure, this was a unique and unbelievable professional experience for her.

Below we focus on the top three ways in which the Summer Schools were a source of inspiration to the 90+ per cent of the participants who agreed or agreed strongly with the statements (only the 2019 group scored just below 90% on the three statements).

INSPIRATION (in %)





Inspired by playing the best concert halls

Some of the music professionals involved in Young built up the participants' expectations of playing in the Concertgebouw, the home of the Concertgebouworkest and one of the best concert halls in the world. But, there was no need. Numerous participants had already mentioned in the surveys and our conversations with them that they had been dreaming about playing in the Concertgebouw ever since they were little and started out studying music. Guest conductor Gustavo Gimeno also admitted, when he addressed the audience before the final concert of Young 2022, that he had dreamt of playing in the Concertgebouw and that he was always listening to recordings made there, from when he was a boy all the way up until the moment he could finally realise his dream. The explosion of excitement that rolled through the tour bus that carried the 2022 participants from Ede to Amsterdam was telling, as soon as the Concertgebouw came into sight. As was the emotion on their faces when they stepped onto the stage immediately after arrival. Not only did a dream come true, but playing in the Concertgebouw was also an empowering experience:

This participant was born in Spain to parents who arrived there as economic migrants from Colombia. Her parents looked for an extracurricular activity for her and tried first with tennis and swimming, but to no avail. Then, they tried to introduce her to violin, and without being aware of it, enrolled her in one of the best music schools of Catalonia. At the beginning of Young she told us that she would like to improve her technique, work on her expression and her leadership in the orchestra. We talked to her again the day after the concert at the Concertgebouw, when she was still digesting the experience: "This was one opportunity to play at the Concertgebouw. Now I will have to work really hard to get there, or somewhere like that, again!" At the same time, she said, "Playing there was a good preparation. It helps me feeling more comfortable with playing at the top. I do no longer think that I do not deserve it, as I did in the beginning of the Summer School." Moreover, she reflected that she was able to work on her technical skills and that she had learned a lot from the sectional teacher and the conductors, from their advice on bowing and how to play specific parts of the pieces. She didn't feel that she played under a lot of stress during Young: "Once I got to know all the musicians, I felt very comfortable playing with them and did not really care if I made mistakes because I felt supported". (Violinist, Spain, 2020-21 participant)

Inspired by the music professionals involved in Young

A second huge source of inspiration to the participants was working with the Concertgebouworkest teachers, the conductors and soloists. As one participant said, "Who does not want to work with his or her idol? For others it might be David Bowie or Beyoncé, but for us the Concertgebouworkest musicians are our superstars!" Many participants mentioned how much they enjoyed the sectionals and chamber music rehearsals with the Concertgebouworkest musicians, and how much they learned from them and the conductors (see for instance the portrait of the Italian violinist at the end of this chapter). Several times also the teaching style was explicitly mentioned; the strictness, firmness and striving for the best possible result in combination with joy and humour was much appreciated. Many participants also mentioned how great it was that they were able to add their 'super stars' to their network. As the portraits in Chapter 5 show, sometimes it was because of Young masterclasses that an alumnus chose to study with a Concertgebouworkest musician who also taught at a European conservatory.

Attending the rehearsal of the Concertgebouwworkest, on the stage of the Concertgebouw, the day after the Young orchestra played their final concert there, was also a huge source of inspiration. Even more than their own rehearsals and the workshops they had done so far, it was this rehearsal that offered the participants a clear view on what life – their future work life – could be like. As one participant remarked,

While watching the rehearsal in the Concertgebouw, I realised that we are just like them, but then in a younger version! For us it is completely special, but for them this is a normal everyday workday! I can imagine and would love to have a normal workday like that myself! (Clarinetist, Portugal, 2022 participant)

Learning new things

Inspiration came also through trying out a range of new things. For some it was the first time that they played in a symphonic orchestra, others were new to chamber music and discovered that they like that. The graph above also shows that the Summer Schools familiarised almost all participants with new repertoire.

In 2019, we observed that the visit of composer Detlev Glanert was a huge source of inspiration for the Young musicians who were unfamiliar with more modern compositions and confused about his piece that they were to play in the Concertgebouw and Flagey. His presence encouraged them to appreciate new repertoire and contemporary compositions. They could ask him questions and felt that they were not only interpreting the piece better, but were also connecting with the composer.

In 2021 and 2022, guest conductor George Jackson offered participants who indicated that they wanted to give conducting a try the chance to conduct the orchestra for the duration of a movement. In 2022, at the end of several tutti rehearsals, he would take 20 minutes to hand the baton over to around five participants. Some appeared to be natural talents like the Italian trombonist who conducted the group with the score book closed and the Peruvian-Spanish violist who brought the whole orchestra under his spell. Not just the conducting participants, but the entire orchestra were also excited and enjoyed being led by their peers.

56

Back home, he created, together with many young musicians, a string orchestra at school which he now conducts. "At first, the conductor was the daughter of a high-ranked official of the school. When she left, another person took over, but now I conduct the orchestra." Although it looked as if he had already received training in conducting when he conducted his peers at the Akoesticum, he explained that he hadn't: "I just do what I think is right! All I had was just one masterclass with George during Young, because I would be conducting one of the chamber music ensembles. But after I finish school, I would like to study conducting rather than just study my instrument." He specifies that he thinks that Madrid offers good musical education at the bachelor level, but not for conducting, and that he therefore would like to study in Germany, or rather, Helsinki. "Helsinki is specifically good for conducting" he said with a twinkle in his eye, hinting at the recently announced appointment of Klaus Mäkelä as the new conductor to the Concertgebouwworkest, who studied at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki. Asked about his experience at Young, he almost spoke faster than we could take notes: "It offered lots of opportunities: not just the conducting, but being able to play in the Concertgebouw and the Elbphilharmonie, to work and play with Isabelle Faust, Gustavo Gimeno, and George Jackson and to hear about their experiences. The Concertgebouwworkest is the best orchestra, and all their musicians are really great people. To have all these contacts for the future, to stay in contact with George and Gustavo... this is the best chance I had in my life!" (Violist, Spain, 2022 participant)

3.3 SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Social development was supported by the social programme of the Summer Schools that the Young team developed in collaboration with United World Colleges. In comparison to the scores on the improvement of the music skills, the outcomes of the Summer Schools on the social skills were more mixed, with more participants answering 'neutral' or 'disagree' (i.e., the skill did not improve compared to before they entered the Summer School). Although the experience of the participants was more mixed, overall, it is still positive in terms of their skill improvement. Most participants saw the use of the social programme, but some critically reflected on it:

I loved the programme of the mentors and the workshops. With some jokes they explained really well what the life of a musician is like. It is also good to be serious together at times, because we joke enough among ourselves. It was also good to get to know one another. Now we are like a family together. (Violinist, Italy, 2022 participant)



What I liked about Young are the concerts, the sense of community, the great care of the mentors and the staff. This is what I will take home, because in Portugal they just don't care! The workshops were helpful, but at the same time, they felt often as too much, and I did not always get the point of the workshops. Some exercises I was not happy with: some were not very objective –like giving others compliments– and the Island Game was kind of funny, but I didn't like that some people viewed the game only as a game. It took up too much time, and offered too little real discussions on the topic. (Clarinetist, Portugal, 2022 participant)

The Summer School Surveys enquired about the improvement the participants registered in their social and communication skills and their diversity skills. The results are explored below, but first we look at a huge social effect of the Summer Schools – likely to be at a par with inspiration – that we did not explicitly address in the surveys: new friendships and networks.

Friendship

"I would have 72 friends less", answered one participant to the question what would be different in his life if he hadn't attended Young Summer School (see portrait at the end this chapter). That surely sums up the social experience of most participants. This is not to say that everyone was close to, or will stay in contact with, all of the participants, but the references to the Young orchestra as 'family' were numerous. Most participants felt quickly at home and part of the group during the Summer Schools.

The games in beginning of the programme were good, they helped me finding a place in the group. I am not always too sure about myself in a group, but I feel very at home now. (Violinist, Sweden, 2022 participant)

This Ghanaian-Polish participant from Portugal told us that she was very shy, did not like to meet new people and did not have many friends back home. She indicated at the start of the Summer School that this was one of the things she wanted to work on during Young. Towards the end of Young she believed that her most important goal was accomplished: she made new friends of different nationalities and felt that she had grown a lot socially, being able to feel more comfortable with people her age. Making music together was an incredible experience, she said, and in Young she succeeded in her role as an ensemble leader: "I learned how to be the leading violin and how to turn that into 'breathing and playing together'." (Violinist, Portugal, 2020-21 participant)

The social dynamic was clearly aided by the social programme –the UWC workshops (including the games) at the beginning of the Summer School directed at introducing everyone, as well as the work of the mentors and their care for the social wellbeing of the individuals in the group. In their frequent meetings, the mentors would always discuss the question "Are there still any 'loners' and how shall we help them to connect to the group?" Moreover, the duration of the Summer School played a role. The duration had not only a positive effect on the musical growth of the participants as a group, but also, as one of the mentors pointed out, on the social growth of the participants. One may endure a week of camp in a group in which one might not feel fully at home, but that is hard to keep up for two and a half weeks. Then one has to change as a person. There are always introverted and extroverted participants, but the mentors refer to an orchestra as a natural place for both types of people and they saw the introverted young musicians gradually opening up during the summer school. A boy that sat to the side with a videogame in the beginning, became part of the group. The duration obviously also helped to solidify friendships, as did the intense experiences that the Summer School entails (e.g. concerts in prominent concert halls). Additionally, we observed that the quick-to-arrive and strong sense of friendship also derived from the participants' shared passion for classical music and the sense of humour that comes with it. At home the participants are sometimes considered 'outsiders' because of their love for classical music, but during Young they were surrounded by like-minded peers. That helped even the shyest of the shy to connect:

"Back home I play in a brass and woodwinds band. But for the rest I do not know anybody who plays an instrument in my neighbourhood. Some think I am weird; others find the music cool. I don't care, but it is great to be here in Young and to be able to talk about symphonies, conductors, conservatories, etc. with the others. We are all into the same thing. (Hornist, Norway, 2022 participant)

Being among like-minded people helps to connect. One of the mentors reflected that she too made her best friends in the orchestras she has been part of rather than in secondary school or university –the places often claimed ideal to make 'friends for life'. What is more, classical music seems like a 'secret lan-

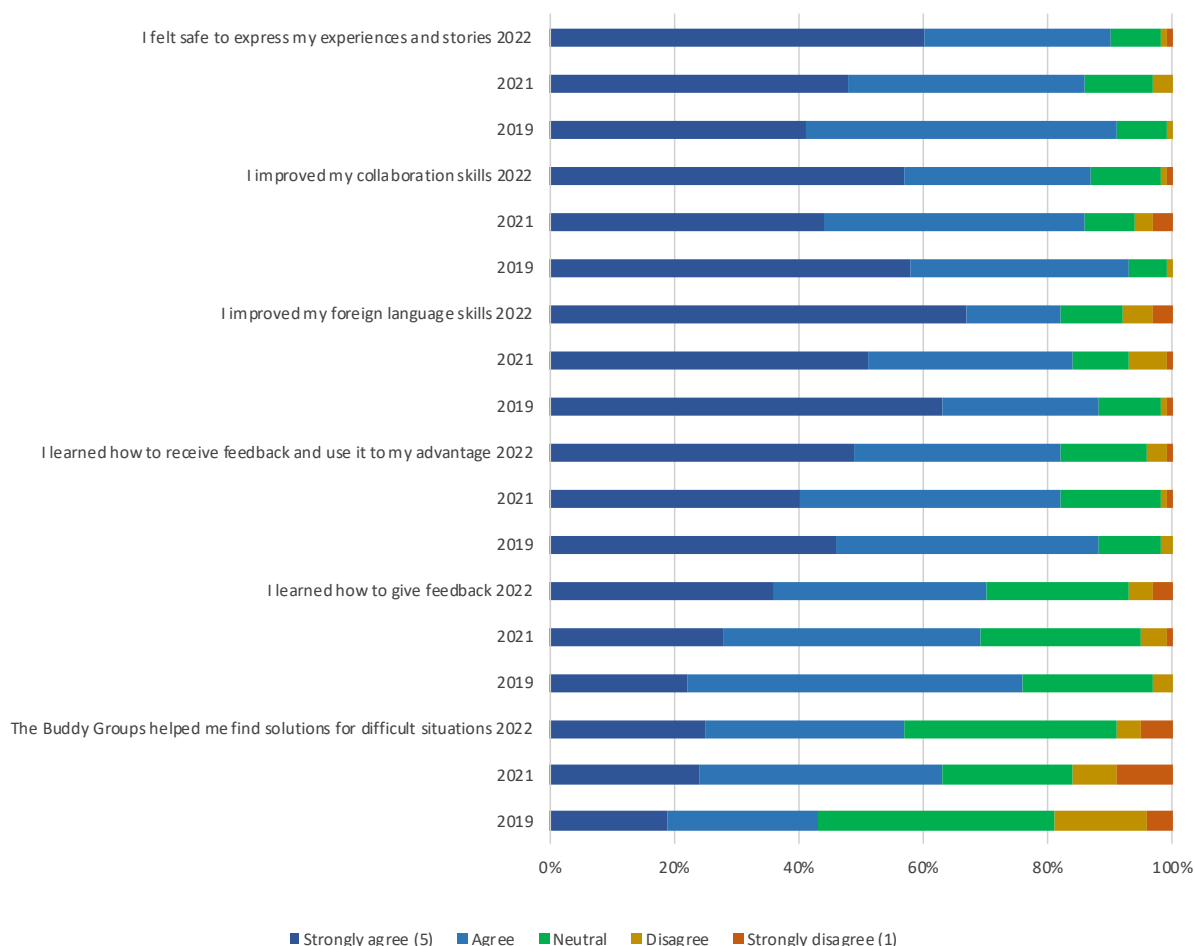
guage' the participants are all able to speak and it comes with its own sense of humour that binds the group and that often escapes non-musician observers! Being able to speak (even if you do not master English very well), express yourself and have your sense of humour understood, cannot but result in the social euphoria and happiness that we observed. This is also what one of the parents alluded to in an email to the Young team after the 2021 Summer School:

I want to thank you and all your team for the wonderful experience you gave our daughter and her peers over the couple weeks she was in your care. She was exhausted on her return to us, but very happily so. It was a wonderful course. She learned so much more than music. She now has a network of friends over all of Europe.

Social and communication skills

On the social and communication level, the Summer School made the participants feel safe to express their experiences and stories and helped them to improve their collaborative skills and foreign languages. The participants also learned how to receive feedback and use it to their advantage. Between 82 per cent and 93 per cent of the participants agreed or agreed strongly with statements on these four aspects. In all years, the least impact was registered for the statement "The Buddy Group helped me to find solutions to difficult questions" – between 57 and 37 per cent answered 'neutral', disagreed or disagreed strongly.

SOCIAL & COMMUNICATION SKILLS (in %)
During the Summer School...



Diversity skills

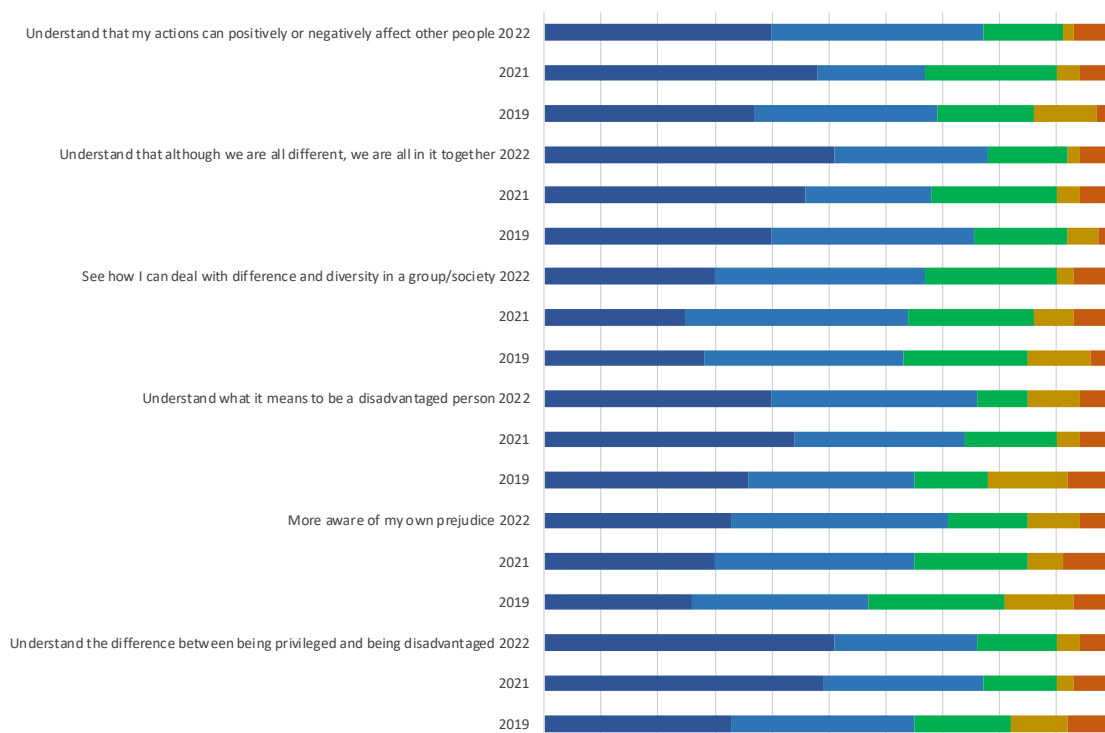
Being able to deal with differences between people is an important skill in Europe's multicultural societies, within which socio-economic disparities continue to increase. The UWC workshops were intended to strengthen the participants' awareness and understanding of difference, privilege and inclusion. This result shows less in the reactions to the Summer School Survey than in the countless times it was

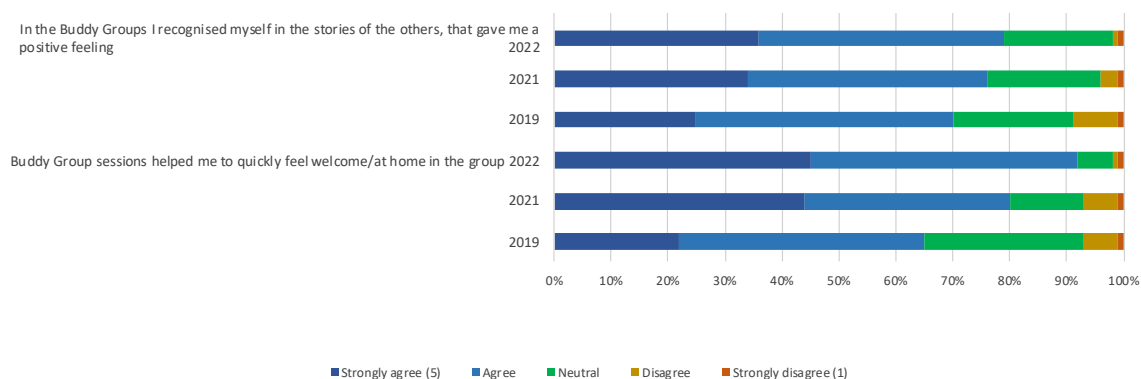
expressed in the open answer questions in the surveys, and in our informal talks and interviews with the young musicians. Meeting and working together with so many young people from so many different backgrounds, cultures, and experiences and operating in such a diverse context might well have been one of the main reasons why the Summer School was such an unforgettable and inspirational experience for many of the participants.

The first thing I thought upon arrival in Ede was 'wow'! Up till then, I was used to what things are like in my town and region; used to how things went in the great programmes that I had been in and the orchestras that I played in in Spain. That was before Young. And then there is life after Young. What I saw, arriving at the Summer School, I had never seen before! Not only was I in a new country, but I was with people from all over Europe. I could learn from every sentence that was spoken. Every day of the program was like a culture class for everyone; learning about different perspectives, traditions, cultures. So far away from my home and family, I learned about life and I opened up. You need to see and experience difference, before you can also see and understand yourself. What also amazed me was that although we came from 27 different countries, in music we were all one. Already the first time we played through the symphony from beginning to end, it sounded good. I was shocked: we were all still teenagers, but with such professionalism and such boundless motivation! I still appreciate the enthusiasm we shared. Like playing and rehearsing for 8 hours a day would normally be tiring, but not here. We all wanted more! I guess we felt so lucky being there that we were taking advantage of every single moment. I think we all felt like being in paradise! (Violinist, Spain, 2019 participant)

Meeting and speaking to people from all over Europe in Young, taught me to think bigger. I always thought only of auditioning to Dutch conservatories, but now I wonder why not try Berlin? That would be a dream come true. Because the group in Young is so international, you automatically behave differently than when everyone was from the Netherlands. In Young you have to be more open. Dutch people are often more down-to-earth; here people are more passionate. In Young, the atmosphere is really different, everyone is so nice. Everyone comes to Young with an open mind, especially if you don't know anyone. Everyone starts at point zero with getting to know each other. In the Netherlands the classical music bubble is so small, you will always meet the same people. The workshops helped to get to know everyone quickly and to gain an understanding of the others and their background –in the Island Game but also the ambassadorship workshop –by hearing how others interpret that and learning from it yourself. What I particularly like about Young is the positive atmosphere. I feel very happy all the time, everyone is so nice, open, and relaxed. (Violinist, The Netherlands, 2022 participant)

DIVERSITY SKILLS (in %) The Island Game made me ...





The Island Game in particular gave the participants the opportunity to reflect on their place in an unequal social structure with privileges and disadvantages, and to become aware that positive action was possible. This awareness was achieved mostly by triggering thoughts and feelings of injustice in the game. In the Summer School Surveys, we checked the participants' improvement in various skills and insights that were worked on in the Island Game (and Buddy Groups). The graph above shows the outcomes. Remember that the diversity skills were the type of skill that most participants felt they had already mastered the best before the Summer Schools (as they indicated in the Baseline Survey). This might explain why participants ticked 'disagree' and even 'strongly disagree' more often about this cluster of statements in the Summer School Survey. Nonetheless, here too, progress could be registered: between roughly 65 per cent and 75 per cent of the participants agreed or agreed strongly with all the statements. The exception is the statement that the Island Game made them more aware of their own prejudice, with which 'only' 57 per cent of the 2019 participants agreed or agreed strongly. We noticed that the 2022 orchestra picked up on the principle of sharing more than the previous groups, possibly because there was more emphasis on sharing in the 2022 workshops than in the years before:

60 *In the beginning of the Island Game, I did not understand what was going on and why they wanted us to play a stupid game. I was part of what turned out to be the disadvantaged group. I was very confused, but it was a good lesson: it is not your fault that you didn't get where you wanted to be. I shared this experience and lesson with my boyfriend, who is also a musician. We both applied to Young, but he did not get accepted. I feel guilty towards him and happiness about being here at the same time. But the workshop taught me not to feel guilty about being privileged, as long as you just share what you've learned. That is what I did. (Violinist, Moldova, 2022 participant)*

It is interesting to note that the graph exhibits a progressive line: each edition the scores are a little higher. The adjustment of the social programme to better attune it to the goals and to build on the experiences from previous year(s) seems to have had the desired effect.

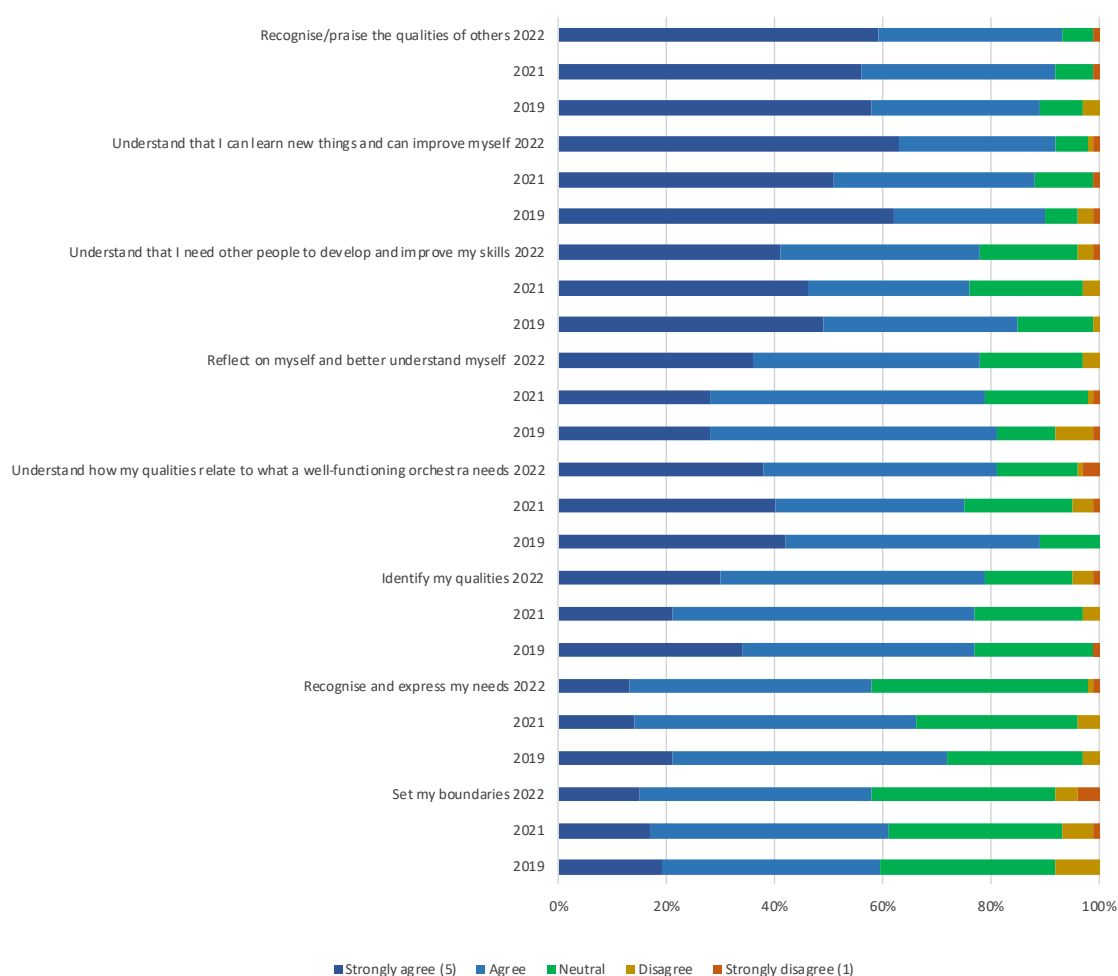
3.4 PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Summer School Survey also addressed a wide range of aspects of self-awareness and mental strength. Although we did not inquire in the surveys into a possible growth in self-confidence as a consequence of attending the Summer School, it appears to have been an important social impact of the Summer School for some of the participants as several of the quotes and portraits indicate.

Self-awareness

The graph below shows that the two aspects that improved the most during the Summer Schools were the participants' ability to recognise and praise the qualities of others and their understanding that they can learn new things and improve themselves. Around 90 per cent agreed or agreed strongly with these statements. What is interesting from a sociological point of view is the strong agreement with statements such as during the Summer School participants learned to "understand that I need other people to develop and improve my skills" and to "understand how my qualities relate to what a well-functioning orchestra needs." In all years, the participants appeared to have more difficulties with recognising and expressing their own needs and with setting their boundaries. Nonetheless, roughly 60 per cent of the participants reported improvement in these aspects of self-awareness.

SELF-AWARENESS (in %) During the Summer School I learned to ...

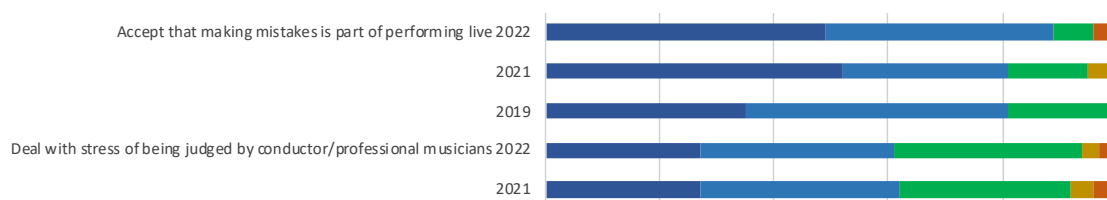


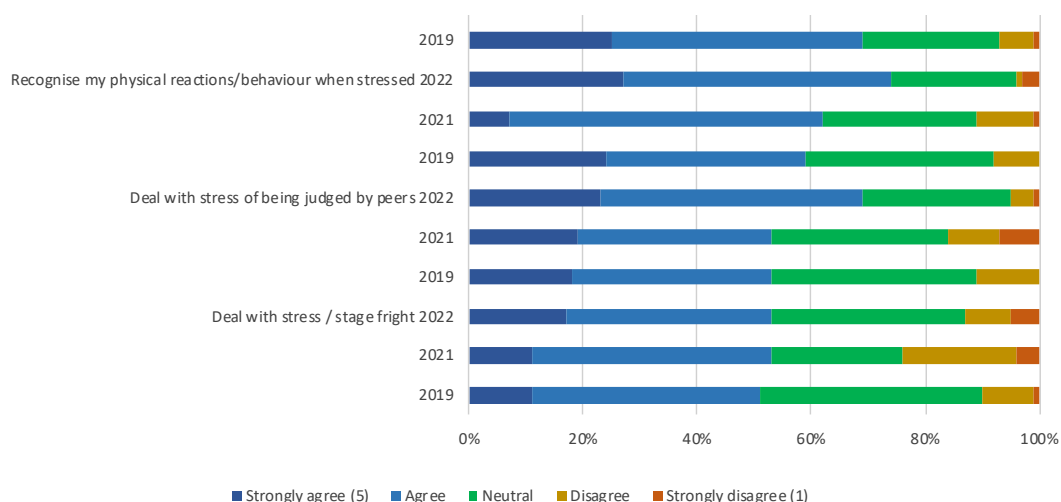
Mental strength

The Summer Schools offered the participants ample opportunities to work on coping with stress and fear through various exercises. For instance, this was addressed in the workshops offered by United World Colleges (and the Zoom sessions in 2020-21), and in the workshop given by one of the Concertgebouw's musicians on his personal experience and way of dealing with stress. The aim of these activities was to teach participants to visualise their success in difficult situations, and thereby control their fear, or to gain a better understanding of particular situations by identifying which one of three personal zones would apply to a situation: the comfort zone, growth zone or the danger zone. The majority of the participants chose the danger zone for the situation "before a performance or playing solo."

In the Baseline Survey, mental strength in dealing with pressure or stress was the ability that scored lowest: all groups felt they could improve on this skill set the most. It is also the skill set for which all groups registered the least improvement in the Summer School Surveys. Nonetheless, progress was made, above all, on the participants' acceptance that making mistakes is part of performing live. The least impact was detected on learning how to deal with being judged by peer musicians and how to deal with stress or stage fright.

MENTAL STRENGTH (in %) During the Summer School I learned (how) to ...





We noticed that in the 2022 group, for several participants it appeared important to strive for and achieve a “balanced life” – we suppose that that was another way of dealing with stress. This was mentioned, for instance, on several posters on which the participants described their biggest dream –these posters with pictures and information on the participants functioned as a kind of off-line Facebook on one of the walls in Akoesticum.

This participant wrote ‘My biggest dream is to have a happy and stable life, surrounded by my family and friends and playing in a big orchestra.’ Asked to elaborate, she explains, ‘Portuguese people always have the will to work hard and they are always stressed! My parents are 65 now, and started working when they were 12. In beginning it was weird being at Young, I wondered all the while in the workshops and social programme: why are we not playing, practising? But looking back I think that this is good; I will need to find a balance! I have already been accepted by the university in Porto to study clarinet. After university, I might apply for a master degree abroad. Being a soloist would fit me, as I like practicing on my own, but I think that I prefer to work in orchestra because that is more stable as a career. (Clarinetist, Portugal, 2022 participant)

One of the mentors indeed observed that some European cultures are strongly focused on working hard, dedicating less attention to establishing a balance between relaxation and hard work. But, in his experience, relaxation –relief from tension– allows for better musical playing.

3.5 LONGER-TERM EFFECTS OF YOUNG

In early 2022, we sent the 2019 and 2020-21 participants a Final Survey to measure the longer-term effects of Young. Of the 96 alumni that filled out the survey, 96 per cent said they *still* experienced an effect of Young Summer School on their development as musicians. They indicated that the part(s) of the Summer School that stimulated this effect on their musical development the most were the orchestra rehearsals, the concerts and the interaction with the other young musicians and with the musicians of the Concertgebouworkest.

Moreover, 89 per cent *still* experienced an effect of Young Summer School on their social or personal development. The vast majority believed this to be due to the interaction with the other young musicians and to a lesser extent to the combination of musical and social programme, the workshops, the interaction with the musicians of the Concertgebouworkest and with the mentors. Additionally, 60 per cent of the respondents said the Young Summer School had a lasting effect on how they dealt with difference and diversity in their everyday lives.

3.6 PORTRAITS ILLUSTRATING MUSIC AND SOCIAL EFFECTS

In spring 2022, we interviewed eleven alumni of the 2019 and 2020-21 editions of Young and talked with them about the longer-term effects of the programme on their musical, social and personal development. Based on these and previous interviews, as well as on their answers to open survey questions, we constructed their portraits. Excerpts of a selection of the portraits are presented below.

CELLIST, ALBANIA,
2019 participant

Back in Albania after Young, he organised small events to promote Young as an ambassador and finished secondary school. He was not yet sure how to proceed in his musical career and felt limited by the COVID-19-pandemic, which made traveling and meeting with professors of music difficult. During that time, the Concertgebouworkest Young team organised online master classes for the participants of the second edition of Young who had seen their summer school postponed because of the pandemic. They invited the participants of the first edition to sign up too. This alumnus took a masterclass with Gregor Horsch, solo cellist at the Royal Concertgebouworkest: 'I felt completely inspired by his way of teaching, that was a real gift of Young. I kept in touch with Gregor Horsch, took more online lessons with him, and then decided to audition and study with him at the music conservatory, the Robert Schumann Hochschule, in Düsseldorf, Germany.'

Asked about the effects that the Summer School had on him, he remarked in spring 2022, 'I had not been part of another orchestra than my school orchestra at the time, and I learned that I like playing in an orchestra and to be the first cellist. But I also discovered in Young that I like chamber music and need to do more of that. Conductor Pablo Heras-Casado was really precise and I remember many of the things he told us and of the insights he shared with us.' Moreover, he wrote, 'My technical music skills, like intonation, listening, and playing together, are still improved. I feel better while playing orchestra and chamber music. Now I pay attention to every single note the others are playing and I try to analyse musically every piece I play. I can handle stressful situations better and I can openly express my thoughts and opinions. I feel that I've changed a lot and I remember every single moment of Young. Without doubt the best experience of my life!'

He continued, 'Young is a really well organised and balanced project. It is great that it was not just about music, and that it had also a social programme. It was socially very intense! The fact that the programme is still going on with success and that we are still in contact – the participants of both editions, the Concertgebouworkest Young team and musicians, really says something. Before coming to Young I was a little shy, but the workshops, games and buddy groups brought me freedom to be more extravert. I feel that after the Summer School, I can express myself better and my social and communication skills are improved. During Young, we learned how to play musically and socially together, how to connect with other musicians. Now, whenever I play chamber music or in an orchestra, I try to balance my way of playing with other players and interact socially with them, just like we did in Young.' Asked about what would be different in his life if he hadn't attended Young, he answers, 'Basically, everything would be different! I would not live and study in Düsseldorf now, I would not have met all these great people, I would have more than 72 friends less, and would not have worked with "living legends". My musical life would definitely be poorer.'

VIOLINIST, ITALY,
2019 participant

When we talked in spring 2022, this alumnus was wearing his Young t-shirt, as he always does for similar occasions. Not only was he still dedicated to the programme, it was instantly clear that the experiences he had in Young Summer School were still present and the memory of Young, still very much alive. Asked about the effects of taking part in Young, he answered, 'I think I am a different musician now; I think that working with the Concertgebouworkest musicians has shaped me a lot. For sure I have grown as a musician, learning a lot from listening to the others and I felt really inspired to improve thanks to the other young musicians and the Concertgebouworkest musicians. Young has indelibly shaped my life.'

This alumnus continued, 'The musical experience in Young was amazing – not only could we work with the Concertgebouworkest musicians, but we could also listen to their rehearsal in the Concertgebouw. And I was so happy to be in the Concertgebouw and that we could play in the Concertgebouw ourselves – in one of the most important concert halls in the world. Just imagine, it was the first time I played in a symphonic orchestra!' He concludes, 'I still benefit from taking part. I text a lot with Arndt Auhagen, a violinist of the Concertgebouworkest, who worked with us during the Summer School, to let him know about my progress. I also took an online masterclass with him that Young offered during the COVID-19 pandemic. He also knows everything about my applications to the German music conservatories. Arndt is very available and very willing to give professional advice. I am so glad that Arndt is interested in me.'

During the Young Summer School in 2019, we observed that this participant spoke many different languages fluently, but that he was at the same time not very talkative, keeping to himself in the beginning. We learned that he had had a hard time in school because of his preference for classical music.

The Young programme seemed to be a good fit for him, he said, as it allowed him to meet like-minded people and other young musical talents with the same preferences and goals in life. He said that he felt more at home at Young than at school in his hometown. In 2020, reflecting on the Summer School, he wrote, 'I think that the social programme really had a strong effect on me. My mental strength to deal with pressure and stress is still improved. My social and communication skills developed a lot because I felt like I was part of a huge family and I felt really comfortable. The first days I was not at ease, but then it was perfect! I was an introverted person and I surprised myself in Young. Young offered me the opportunity and the capacity to meet many people that I didn't know from different traditions, languages and cultures, and it turned out that I liked that a lot! I hadn't expected that, and I couldn't believe that I could befriend so many people! The staff, the mentors and the Concertgebouworkest musicians played an important role in this regard. I have established a strong connection with the other young musicians from all over Europe. In fact, we still text one another in our Young 2019 WhatsApp group. It used to be daily just after Young Summer School, to reduce our sadness after the last concert in Brussels.' In spring 2022, he added, 'Two weeks after the Summer School, I was still in a post-Young depression. It was a really solid and strong experience, very difficult to let go. In fact, we are still in contact in the Young 2019 WhatsApp group, and in the joint WhatsApp group with the young musicians from the 2020-21 edition, but less frequently. Now I exchange, talk or meet my friends from Young more on a one-on-one basis, those I felt closest to. Four of us established the Ede String Quartet – named after the town where Young Summer School took place – and we gave a concert in Spain.'

He concludes, 'I still have beautiful memories of Young 2019, and also of us performing in the Concertgebouw together with important figures from classical music like the conductors Pablo Heras-Casado and James Ross, and with Julian Rachlin, the solo violinist – that is in everyone's memory. It has been the most wonderful experience in my life. The common opinion among the alumni is that Young was the best experience so far in all of our lives. I really enjoyed every single moment and I feel grateful for having had the opportunity to meet the professional orchestra members of the Concertgebouworkest and to meet the other young musicians and for being able to establish a strong connection with them, musically and socially. During the almost three weeks of Young, we grasped the opportunity that we were given, we gave all we had, our very best; an experience that is hard to forget! It was just perfect, except maybe for the Dutch food! At the moment we are spread out all over the world; there are Young-friends in for instance Germany, The Netherlands, and France, and an Italian and a Turkish violinist are studying music in the USA. But we will meet again. That is the promise we made!'

CELLIST, SWEDEN 2020-21 participant

At the end of Young Summer School 2021, she told us, 'I feel emotionally exhausted. I have managed to make new friends, but it's been too intense for my Nordic personality! I reconnected with my instrument after two years of playing less intensively, but it has mainly been a collective learning process. It was all about playing with other people and developing at same time. I did not have the time to practice alone. I can see now that I will have to continue to grow, but I have learned how to better set my boundaries during Young. I am glad that everybody has respected my boundaries here. If I did not want to socialize, I had the courage to say no and go to my room. And I have been respected in that decision. I have also grown as a leader of the celli. They respect me as a person and I respect them too. I feel support from all the others. I also felt accepted by the others when I told them that I did not aim for the highest level in technique or musicianship, but wanted to aim for a level from where I can help and make a change. I am grateful for that.'

Reflecting on the effects of Young Summer School, this alumna wrote in spring 2022, 'Young Summer School opened up new networks in the field of classical music. I feel that I have many contacts that I can reach out to in order to organise new projects around Europe. And my self-awareness is still improved. During the summer camp I was suffering from mental health issues, but I felt that I had the freedom to participate in a manner that I felt comfortable with.' In our conversation in spring 2022, she added, 'There was a lot of recognition among the participants, that accounts for me too, but I also felt old. I didn't have the energy to stay up all night and I was in bad place when I was there. In the beginning I was tempted to question myself about why I was there, but in the end, I knew I was strong enough and deserved to be there too. Some of the memories are blurred now, but I definitely remember feeling support from the workshop leaders, the musicians and the other participants. I am still in contact with a few of them. I appreciate that everyone around Young cared about you, that you were a person beyond music. I have been in several international music programmes, but Young was the best. It was the highest level of participants, teachers and places where we played, think of the reputation of the Concertgebouworkest.'



est and the Concertgebouw. It was also the best because of the balance between attention for musical and social growth in the programme and because of the highly professional Young organisation.'

VIOLINIST, ROMANIA

2020-21 participant

This alumnus explained that if he would not have attended Concertgebouworkest Young, a lot would be different in his life: 'It was during Young and playing in the Concertgebouw that my future was decided! Before Young Summer School, I wanted to go and study at the conservatory in Bucharest. But my perspective on music changed through Young, more specifically, my perception of how music could or should be taught. By the end of the Summer School, I wanted to study in The Netherlands! That was both an exciting and a scary decision, he admitted, 'but the United World Colleges mentor who guided the 'Buddygroup' that I was part of during the Summer School, and with whom I stayed in contact afterwards, encouraged me to take the leap. He told me to just go and give studying abroad a chance. My sister, too, supported me in my decision to study abroad. She always kept me strong and encouraged me to push myself out of the comfort zone. So, I auditioned at the music conservatory in The Hague and got in!'

Elaborating on the change in his perception, he said, 'There are great teachers in Romania, but they still very much adhere to the old Soviet style of teaching; they are focused on working and practising hard, and they don't care about stress or your emotional wellbeing. The Western teaching style in Young took me by surprise. For instance, the way Daniel Harding and George Jackson conducted, how they unified the group. But, also Arndt Auhagen and Caroline Strumphler of the Concertgebouworkest have a similar approach to teaching music, I think. It showed in the way they demonstrated how the music works and in how they explained things to us. The Western style is more calm, not as pushy; you are given more time to evolve. I liked that approach!'

He continued, 'I was also surprised by Amsterdam, by The Netherlands, and positively shocked by the people, including the Young team and the mentors. They cared a lot about us, they were so helpful, they did not push you aside if you had a problem. They did not make you feel bad if you did something wrong. It was a culture shock, really! When I was six years old, I had a teacher who hit my fingers with the bow. When I grew up, during one period, I changed teachers five times in six years. One of them did not even teach me, but would go outside to smoke a cigarette. Another teacher thought that insulting students was the best way to make great musicians out of them. The teacher I work with now also applies the Eastern teaching style, but she is great and saved me from being an amateur and from quitting music, when I was disorganized and undisciplined. She even attended our Young concert at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam! I am sure that every country will have its bad sides, but I think that in countries like Belgium and the Netherlands people are more patient with teenagers.'

Looking back at what he learned from Young Summer School, he wrote in spring 2022, 'I think I learned a lot and improved my musical and social abilities. My coordination with other players in the orchestra has improved and so did my interpretation skills. I can understand music better and the practice is way better than before.' In our conversation, he emphasised the effect that taking part in Young had on his emotional wellbeing: 'During Young, I participated in my first-ever workshop on emotions! The workshops on how to deal with stress and emotions were really nice. I would not have minded more workshop on how to control emotions like anger and stress, as a replacement for some of the other workshops they had us participate in. But the point is, back home, I have never seen anyone paying attention to musicians and their emotions. Rather than ignoring the problem, in Young we were offered an approach to solve it! After the workshops, I had different conversations, as I understood that we are all the same; we all have emotions. With regard to stress, they told us that there is nothing to worry about, that we should just enjoy the moment. That is great! And it works. I am more relaxed nowadays, not so tense in my hands and arms when I am playing.'

He concluded, 'Take also the research – the surveys that we filled out and this interview, it shows that they care. That is wonderful. That is one of the reasons why I want to study in The Netherlands. It is great to be seen as a complete person; not only as a musician, but as a person with emotions and other needs too. I think people need to be taken care of a little bit! And musicians need people who ask them about their development – Who you are? How are you? What do you want to do? What do you need to achieve that? – so that you start thinking about that, so that you might understand things better and are able to reflect.'





4 AMBASSADORSHIP

Alumni of Concertgebouworkest Young are expected to become active ambassadors for Young and classical music in their own neighbourhoods, cities and/or countries, after they have returned home from the Summer School. This chapter looks at the results of the Young programme with regard to ambassadorship.

The Concertgebouworkest Young-team interprets ambassadorship as promoting both classical music and the Young programme. The Young team sees ambassadorship as the peer-to-peer creation of a new generation interested in classical music. Additionally, it understands ambassadorship as a means of having participants experience different routes they can take with their music, other than becoming a (top) soloist or orchestra member – the dream almost all of them have on entering the programme.

The overall goals with the ambassadorship programme are to widen the interest in and appreciation for classical music and to increase the visibility of Concertgebouworkest Young. The goals on the level of the individual participants in Young are threefold:

- ▶ To stimulate personal growth in young musicians by letting them discover how they could connect to and share with other people through their passion for music.
- ▶ To have them become more appreciative of these alternatives and possibly stimulate their social engagement.
- ▶ To broaden their view of career opportunities.

During the Summer Schools, and in 2020-21 also in the online programme, the Concertgebouworkest Young-team aimed to stimulate ambassadorship in the participants in at least three ways (see also Chapter 1):

- ▶ By supporting the participants in defining for themselves how they would like to shape their ambassadorship;
- ▶ By training them in practical ambassadorship skills (e.g. digital, teaching and site-specific concert skills);
- ▶ By offering inspiration and sharing examples of the work of socially-engaged, professional (classical) musicians.

The Young-team set up the ambassadorship programme without too many specific requirements; they want to enthuse, not pressure, the young musicians into doing things. The emphasis is not on how much they do or what they do, but on the fact that they start setting up activities that, in turn, might make them aware of the influence or impact they can have when sharing their music.

4.1 SELECTING POTENTIAL AMBASSADORS

An ambassador is not only a good and inspiring musician, but also needs social skills to get their message across. That is why the social characteristics of the applicants were of interest in the selection process. The lesson learned from the first edition of Young was that the answers to the question in the application form regarding non-musical interests or activities offered only sparse information, as only a few participants talked in their biographical essays about their social characteristics. That is why we recommended having the applicants explicitly respond to the three goals of the Young programme in their application. In addition to reflecting on how they could use some extra support in their musical career and on how they could help Young achieve its goal of representing the diversity within European countries, one question read 'What would make you a good ambassador?' Focusing attention on ambassadorship in the application not only gave those responsible for the selection process more insight in the applicants' backgrounds, but also provided the applicants with a better understanding of what Young was about and what the programme expected of them as participants and as ambassadors. In practice the answers to this question on ambassadorship remained relatively unspecific with the applicants mentioning, for instance, their social skills and networks, rather than offering concrete examples of what ambassador activities they were already undertaking or would aim to set up after taking part in Young.

4.2 RESULTS ON AMBASSADORSHIP

The results presented below are based on the Medium-term Effects Survey and the Final Survey that were sent out to the participants of Young 2019 in January 2020 and the participants of 2019 and 2020-2021 programmes in 2022. The 2022 group is not included in the analysis as the evaluation research terminated too soon after they attended the Summer School for them to have developed any ambassadorship activities.

Additionally, we selected ten alumni in winter 2020 and ten alumni in spring 2022 and invited them to a Zoom interview to talk about their ambassador experiences.

Number of ambassadorship activities per alumnus

As we asked the 2019 group in the Medium-term Effects Survey to list all their digital and real-life activities and actions as ambassadors, we were able to establish the number of ambassador actions executed per alumnus. We can conclude that the largest part of the respondents (46%) organised two different actions, 31 per cent set up three or four activities, and 20 per cent one activity. Only 3 per cent said that they had not been active as ambassadors yet.

Number of different ambassador actions (2019, N=59)	Responses	%
0	2	3
1	12	20
2	27	46
3	13	22
4	5	9

We suppose that this roughly reflects a normal distribution in which a small portion of the group did not do much in terms of ambassadorship, an almost equally small portion was really active and inventive, and the largest portion of the group moved around the mean – in this case, the average of 2.1 activities per person. Note that the 'reluctant group' might be slightly bigger as their lack of activities could have been the reason for several alumni not to complete the survey.

Most frequent ambassador activities

In the Final Survey we asked the 2019 and the 2020-21 groups to list all their digital and real-life activities and actions as ambassadors. The activities that the respondents listed fitted, for the most part, the pre-given answer categories. The slightly lower number of teaching and concert activities shown in the Final Survey are most likely explained by the restrictions on social contact and mobility in place during the COVID-19-pandemic in the participants' countries of residence.

All digital and real-life activities and ambassador actions – multiple answers per participant were possible	2019 - in % (N=59, a total of 127 answers in Medium-term Effects Survey 2020)	2019 + 2020-21 - in % (N=96, a total of 185 answers in Final Survey 2022)
Posts on social media	73	69
Nominated potential candidate(s)	46	44
Teaching	37	25
Organising concerts	36	32
Other	20	14
I was not active as an ambassador (yet)	3	9

Posting on social media

The table shows that the most common action taken by those who were active as ambassadors was posting on social media (between 69% and 73% of the respondents). It is interesting to note that almost a quarter of the participants did not employ digital means.



Nominating potential candidate(s)

A large group of alumni nominated potential candidate(s) for the next edition of Young (between 44% and 46% of the respondents). They encouraged other young musicians from their networks (mainly from their music schools) and, occasionally, they nominated their siblings to apply for Young. In the Final Survey, several respondents mentioned (proudly) that their nominated candidate(s) were accepted to take part in Young.

Teaching

A fairly large group of alumni taught music classes (between 25% and 37% of the respondents). Some mention that their students were peers, but more often their teaching was directed at younger children. From the interviews we learned that some taught formal lessons, that is, they were paid to teach the same student(s) on a regular basis. Others taught in a more informal way, for instance, their students took music lessons with a professional music teacher and the alumni helped them only with specific musical skills. Several interviewed alumni saw teaching as extremely important to ambassadorship. They experienced teaching as a very effective way to engage pupils in classical music and to convey their own passion for music to them. This was specifically because of the small-scale setting and the focus on helping and motivating a person to continue to improve on their instrument. These alumni viewed themselves as role models or sources of inspiration for their pupils, because they too are young but they play at an advanced level.

I'm currently a bassoon teacher at a local music school because I believe it's vital to motivate the next generation. Furthermore, I'm regularly playing with Concertgebouwkest Young musicians in various concerts. I always use Young hashtags on social media. (Bassoonist, Belgium, 2019 participant)

Organising concerts

Between 32 per cent and 36 per cent of the respondents organised classical music concerts. It is doubtful that all the concerts that the alumni described were indeed organised by them as some explicitly mentioned playing with the (school) orchestras that they were already part of or being invited to perform in the music programmes of third parties. The respondents that described concerts they organised themselves mentioned concerts in the concert hall of their music school where they played to an audience of predominantly music students, teachers, friends and family, and/or concerts in their hometown where they played for a wider group of local residents. For instance, locations included the local church, a children's hospital at Christmas time and the residence of the respondent's grandfather. Respondents would also play in charity or benefit concerts (e.g. for a charity that helps children with mental illness). Sometimes they performed solo, sometimes with their regular music group or orchestra. Sometimes they played together with professional musicians or orchestras and sometimes with amateur musicians (e.g. disabled young musicians or the older generation). One respondent mentioned organising monthly concerts in which musicians and visual artists collaborate. Occasionally there was time for exchange with audience members about classical music after the concerts, but, oftentimes, there was not. A few alumni were ambitiously setting up their own ensembles with whom they performed and toured (or planned to tour).

Three other members of Young and I created a string quartet and we played a few concerts in churches to share classical music with people not related to it. I also encouraged my friends to apply to Young Programme (and 5 of them are accepted!). I also plan to found an orchestra and to lead the Facebook page about my country's music, but I need a bit more time to start it. (Violinist, Poland, 2020-21 participant)

Word-of-mouth

The main activity mentioned in the 'Other' category, as well as by almost all respondents in the open answer question asking them to describe their ambassador activities, can be labelled as 'word-of-mouth': 'spreading the word' about classical music and Young by talking to other young musicians, non-musician friends and people back home. The alumni pointed out to listeners that classical music is fun and/or how Young was an incredible experience and how it helped them grow. Word-of-mouth mostly occurred in direct conversations, but one respondent mentioned promoting Young in a documentary, and another on a radio interview. Several respondents shared that the Young branded goods, such as the stickers they had on their instrument cases and the Young T-shirts they would be wearing, triggered many conversations with people outside of their own networks, for instance when traveling. While almost all alumni promoted Young (offline) by word-of-mouth, some took it a notch up and organised meetings to talk specifically about Young. For instance, one alumnus arranged to visit several music schools in his region to promote Young.



Many of the people in my year group at school are not particularly interested in classical music. I am trying to change this by introducing them to new composers and music, and by showing them that classical music is something great. (Double bass player, German-Dutch, 2020-21 participant)

I used any chance I had to spread the word of Young! Through social media, such as sharing videos of the concerts and stories about the days at Akoesticum, and, even more concrete, through wearing the Young T-shirt whenever I travel by plane or on long trips. Some Young-colleagues and I are all part of the same youth orchestra back home and we like to make sure that everyone knows about Young, by talking to our colleagues about how it influenced us and by playing Concertgebouworkest Young-related pieces for fun. (Hornist, Belgian-Spanish, 2020-21 participant)

The extent to which the alumni succeeded in exerting their ambassadorship, specifically where teaching and concerts were concerned, were curbed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Sometimes plans could not advance because of the participants' age, for instance, in cases where national regulations prescribed a minimum age of 18 for certain activities, or as a result of their age-related (partial) lack of skills and experience in organising concerts. The number of activities was also influenced by the limited amount of time the alumni had available for ambassadorship.

We guess it is not unusual that some participants focus on activities that might take less effort, such as spreading information by word-of-mouth, posting a few pictures of Young on Instagram, and/or by nominating a candidate for the next edition of Young. Others may engage in more demanding tasks such as teaching and organising concerts. A few alumni – the exceptionally active organisational talents – invested a lot of time and energy in ambassador activities. Some did so already before attending Young and sometimes even beyond the field of music. There were, for instance, the 2019 participant who was part of the Cyprus Youth Parliament, the 2020-21 participant who was member of the Artistic Council of Norwegian Youth Orchestras, and the 2019 British violinist had been part of many orchestras and had organised activities and concerts to bring classical music to the people of her town already and was brimming with ideas for the future (see portrait in Chapter 5). Exceptionally active participants like these were limited to just a few per edition.

The incentive for and the goals of ambassadorship

Most alumni seem very much in accord with the Young-team when the importance of ambassadorship is concerned. Moreover, ambassadorship comes naturally to the majority of the alumni. They are so crazy about classical music, playing their instruments and performing that they want to share it with the world! But the incentive to be an ambassador is broader than their wish to share their love of music. They indicate that they also benefit. They want to 'save the future of classical music', and/or to do something in return for being able to take part in Young (ambassadorship as an expression of gratitude):

1. Their ambassadorship is understandably not only altruistic, the interviewed alumni are clear about what they gain from their activities as ambassadors: by organising concerts they create more moments to perform themselves, they seek exposure, and/or believe that these activities are also good for their reputation and careers. However, they also experience the general pressure to advertise themselves (self-promote) on social media, as well as the need to become visible as musicians;
2. Their drive to promote classical music is also fed by the wish to help 'save the future of classical music'. Many participants throughout the years told us, "If we don't work on creating younger and wider audiences for classical music now, we will not have a job in the future!" They want to correct the negative connotation of classical music and the stereotypical images that people may have ('it is boring', 'just for older people', 'it cannot be a career', etc.). They want instead to stimulate love for classical music by organising concerts for their peers or younger children, or by organising concerts in areas (often where they come from) where classical music is less abundant. Others (also) encourage peers to pick up an instrument (active participation).
3. As such, the alumni seemed first and foremost ambassadors of classical music, but, they were also keen to promote Young by sharing their highly positive experiences in their networks. Being grateful as they are for the opportunity the Concertgebouworkest has given them to participate in Young 2019, they want to do something in return. As one participant put it, "I promise to do my best to show that I was worthy of receiving the support that this project gave me!"

A few alumni expressed additional incentives for sharing their music with people beyond the concert hall such as two female participants in 2022 who want to “heal people through music” and are considering becoming music therapists. Occasionally, the incentive is more ‘political’. For example, the Swedish cellist, participant in 2020-21 who we met at the end of Chapter 3, wants to work with music to fight injustice and to make a change in the world: “I do not like inequalities, racism or discrimination against women. I would like to organise concerts of female and/or non-binary conductors or composers in which I would combine their music and the stories of their lives. And I am thinking of a series of monthly concerts about climate change for which I would find music to fit the theme and create a fund for donations.”

Target groups

In the beginning, the Young team emphasised peers as the main target group for ambassador activities. This focus may have broadened a bit throughout the years in that the inspirational examples and activities during the last two Summer Schools were not only focused on activities directed at young people. For instance, as mentioned above, the 2020-21 group learned about working with music for peacebuilding, and the 2022 group about working with music in hospitals, care homes, and with disabled people. The target groups that the participants intended to reach with their activities appeared to be largely dictated by their motivations to become ambassadors:

1. From the 2019 alumni that mentioned their focus, the majority targeted peers in their networks, and other young people for their teaching and/or as audiences for their concerts. With all the activities they set up, they kept their non-musician friends from school and in their neighbourhood in the back of their minds. The 2020-21 participants also intended to share their experiences in Young with people in their social networks, mainly their non-musician friends, musician friends in the orchestras they are part of, peers from high school, and family.
2. Additionally, several alumni mentioned bringing classical music to rural regions and ‘deprived communities’ where classical music is underrepresented as a cultural activity and/or where people may be prejudiced against classical music (‘boring’, ‘just for old people’, etc.).
3. Some alumni were interested in performing with or for older generations.
4. In each edition only a few other target groups were mentioned. One 2019 alumna wanted to work on engaging culturally diverse or socio-economically underprivileged groups; one 2020-21 alumna liked to share her knowledge “with disadvantaged children that do not have the opportunity to enter the world of classical music”, and one 2022 alumna who had already played in hospitals and an orphanage wanted to continue playing there as much as she was able to. Another participant took a rather broad approach to his target groups:

I would like to show that classical music is not boring. I performed several pieces on a musical TV show. I have played on the street to show the music. I also played for the elderly and even for the King of Belgium. It doesn't matter who the audience is, I want to bring them the music! (Cellist, Belgium, 2020-21 participant)

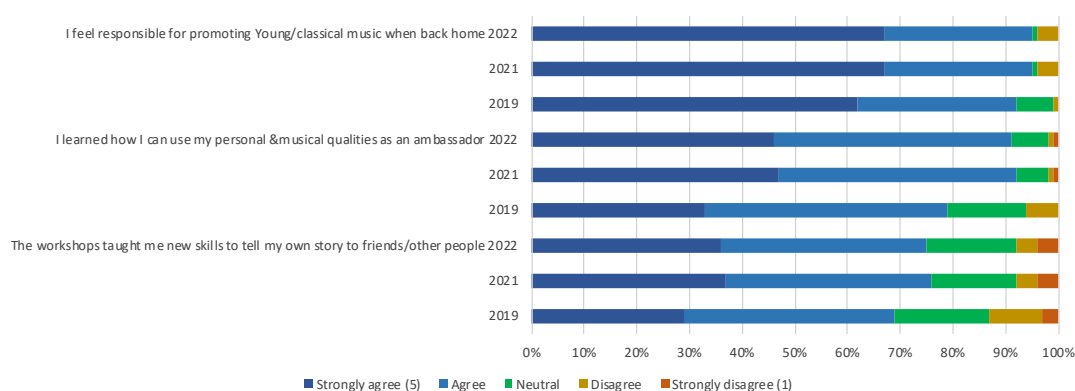
The interviews with alumni made it clear that predominantly family and friends and/or other local people attend the concerts organised by the alumni. Several interviewed alumni use the Young logo to raise the profile of their event. We could not measure the audience’s response to the ambassador activities of the alumni, but the respondents who mentioned audience feedback to their concerts reported positive responses. The alumni were aware that it may be difficult to get people who know little about classical music to attend a concert, but they held the strong belief that if those groups did attend, they would enjoy it and change their minds.

Developing ambassadorship during Young Summer School

The Summer School Surveys that the participants of each edition filled out towards the end of their stay in the Netherlands, also contained statements on the effect of the Young Summer School on their ambassadorship (skills). The graph below presents the outcomes. Note the high percentage of participants who felt responsible for promoting Young and classical music on their return home – between 92 per cent and 95 per cent agreed or agreed strongly with this statement. A large majority of participants also indicated that they learned how to use their personal and musical qualities as an ambassador during the Summer School (between 79% and 92% of the respondents agreed or agreed strongly with this state-

ment). A slightly smaller, but still substantive group of participants indicated that the Summer School workshops taught them new skills for sharing their stories with friend and family on their return home, for instance, via social media (between 69% and 76 % of the respondents agreed or agreed strongly).

AMBASSADOR SKILLS (in %)



In order for the alumni to become—even more—active as ambassadors, we asked the 2019 ambassadors to describe anything they might need from Concertgebouworkest Young or that would help them in their role as ambassadors. The 28 respondents who answered this question expressed a range of needs: the need to stay in contact with the Concertgebouworkest Young organisation, for instance, to maintain the relationships but also to *“be reminded to keep practicing as an ambassador”*; the general need for networks and networking from which *“opportunities to meet new people, concert opportunities where I can share my love for music with others”* would stem. Some respondents expressed the need for financial support in order, as one respondent wrote, to fund *“projects and things.”* Another respondent indicated what these “things” might be: *“Flights, musical scores, microphones...”* Other respondents expressed the need for practical support, for instance, to find *“a hall to organise a recital for children and other musicians”* or for *“media coverage, as well as performance experience.”* The enthusiasm for organising concerts amongst some participants appears at a par with their lack of experience.

Something that the 2019 participants did not mention, but do nevertheless seem to be in need off, is time. From the interviews with 2019 and 2020-21 alumni, it became apparent how incredibly full their daily schedules are: attending school, doing homework, practising on their instruments, going to music classes and/or orchestra rehearsals, living their social lives, and on top of organising the various musical (ambassador) activities.

4.3 PORTRAITS OF AMBASSADORS

The first four portraits below are of 2019 participants whom we talked to in the winter of 2020. These interviews focussed on the ambassadorship activities the alumni had developed in the previous half a year. These alumni are representative of the group of ‘very active ambassadors’. Their stories illustrate their ‘philosophy’ on ambassadorship, the many different activities they developed, as well as the different target groups they reached. Interestingly, these four all turned out to be not very active on social media. This might be a coincidence or it might indicate that being active in the ‘real, analogue world’ and being active in the ‘digital world’ of social media are largely mutually exclusive activities. The final portrait offers the example of a 2022 participant who (so far) expressed her ambassadorship almost entirely through social media.

TROMBONIST, SPAIN 2019 participant

His ambassador activities stemmed from a personal motivation to help others and to take part in the music activities of his local community. Furthermore, he wanted to promote Concertgebouworkest Young in return for what they did for him, which he greatly appreciates.

“My most important ambassador activity was the concert in the Isabel la Católica Theatre in Granada, organised by Orquesta Joven del Sur de España in collaboration with an organisation that helps disa-



bled people. We did a joint benefit concert with the disabled musicians, and others sang in the choir or acted. They were around 12 and 13 years old. The audience consisted of the people of Granada and the musicians' families. On the first day, I got in touch with two disabled kids, one with a growth problem and the other with attention deficit. They were having lessons with a private teacher, but I gave them musical advice and earned their trust from the beginning. I had never met disabled children before, but we got on really well, and it was just like talking to any other person! Just because they have a disability does not mean that they have no knowledge of music! I gave them my telephone number and they texted me soon after to say thanks. This was important to my role as an ambassador because it means that I do not only surround myself with people who are in the same place as me, but also with people out of my comfort zone."

"I also did a benefit concert for the Caritas Foundation in the Palacio del Congreso de Granada, and I also played as a soloist with a band of elderly people that performed with a group of musicians from the municipal band of Granada. This was in a small town close to Granada, where music is not promoted much. In Spain it is like this: all that is promoted is football and sports. The local elderly people organisation and a few young people attended the concert. Next month, I will do another concert with them. It is a way to support older people as well as kids that are learning how to play music."

"In my town, I help a boy with music lessons, but not like in a formal class. We also have a group of trombone and tuba players here and we help each other. I don't do much on social media, but I posted about my experience in Young. I forwarded the call for Young 2020 to the Orchestra of Andalucía. Many musicians felt encouraged, because four of us, who recently got selected by this orchestra, participated in Young. We told them that it was a good experience: the playing, the workshops, the getting to know the other musicians. I offered, but did not need to write a letter of recommendation because the teachers did. Because Concertgebouworkest Young gave me the opportunity to participate in the orchestra, I feel that as an ambassador for Young I must do something in return. But it is not very clear to me what being an ambassador is and what I have to do. And I cannot really separate these things I did for Young from the things I usually do. If I recommend Young to someone it is because I believe that it will be great for that person. I do this just to help people."

FLAUTIST (FLUTE/PICCOLO), DENMARK 2019 participant

To her, ambassadorship is about cultivating a love for classical music in young people, for instance her students, especially in the rural part of Denmark where she is from. Her ambassadorship involves playing concerts and teaching. She is not very active on social media, but recommended a cellist from her region for Young 2020 – to offer him an experience outside the region so he did not become "narrow-minded." "I would do the concerts and the teaching even if I was not an ambassador of Young, but it is nice to be reminded that I am acting not only for my own career but also representing something bigger." She has played different concerts with local ensembles around where she lives. "I play in my school's big band and in an ensemble of four violins. I've been playing in churches all around the northern part of Denmark. I played in a children's opera some months ago. Usually, I play with a pianist and sometimes as a flute soloist, anything from Baroque to Modern. When I play during church service, it is the church organising. Sometimes I offer to play a matinee, but they organise it. This year I am going to Michigan to play in an orchestra."

"I want to make sure that the audience in the church won't feel disconnected from the music, that they enjoy a piece. I select a repertoire that shows my technical and musical capabilities, but at the same time I select pieces that are easy to listen to or that they never heard before. The audience that I usually get is the elderly. When younger people come, it is because they like classical music. In the area where I play, people say hello to me on the streets. Sometimes I receive invitations to play at parties. I think the fact that I am young and play classical music really makes them rethink the idea that they have about this music. That it is not just for old people. In music class in high school, I think I made a lot of people change their thoughts about making music. In high school there are people who never touched an instrument and I respect that because in Young we learned to respect everyone, give them space, and respect other levels."

"I think being a teacher is the most effective way to try to affect the individual. In concerts you address a group, but teaching has a long-lasting effect because you can help an individual to make progress and even be an ambassador himself in other situations. It helps to motivate me that I get paid, but teaching for 30 minutes and having a kid and parents happy, is a good experience overall. Sometimes the students are frustrated, but their playing will only get better and that motivates me, too. I enjoy teaching. I teach piano students. My flute students have a teacher already and I teach more details and the practi-

cal side. Or their mothers ask me for advice and I teach a crash course. I also offer my students more playing occasions, like in the church. The parents of one of my current students told me that just her being inspired by me has made their daughter practice more and enjoy what she is doing more. In addition to their regular teacher, with me, they have someone else to look up to."

TUBA PLAYER, PORTUGAL

2019 participant

He understands ambassadorship as being about promoting classical music and cultivating a love for classical music amongst non-musicians. "I have played with the Portuguese Orquestra Filarmonia das Beiras, a professional orchestra. Also, I organised a benefit concert in my hometown as part of a series of concerts that let people experience classical music. I played a sonata by Henri Eccles. The concert was about one hour. The first half I played, the other half I talked about my experience in Concertgebouw-orkest Young and about how classical music is not boring! I talked about classical music in general and about what people listen to in Portugal. I tried to trigger them to go to classical music concerts and to go as often as they can. The audience, mainly older concertgoers and some friends, asked me many things about the projects that I have done, about the Concertgebouw-orkest, but also things like what age is best to start playing a musical instrument. I think they are starting to enjoy the music a little bit more. People had to buy a ticket and the money went to a charity for people with mental illness. I invited the president of the charity so the audience knew where the money was going."

"In my region, the majority of the concerts are in Lisbon and Porto, but not in my city. That is why I was very happy to be part of this series of concerts. That is also why I would like to do another larger concert in my town. People in my city know me and they are always asking me what I do. But after Young, I started to get more questions about music and about people's musical tastes. It gives me a happy feeling that people talk to me about music. I hope that it motivates them to enjoy classical music and to be more open-minded towards it."

"To promote Young and classical music, I also gave some interviews, like the one with a local newspaper. They asked me about my experience in Young, about playing in the Concertgebouw and how it helped me to develop myself. People in my city were very proud of me. It is a small city and they are happy to see that I represented them in the orchestra. People told me to go on with my job!"

"At music school, we wanted to set up a brass quintet, but our teachers said that they do not have the time to support us. There I also talked about Young to my classmates. One girl has applied. I think it is very important to nominate and talk about the programme, because in Young people learn new musical skills and things to be a better person. It's important to have programmes like this, because they play a big role in people's careers. I have not been teaching and I do not have Facebook, Instagram or anything, so I do not post. I just don't like social media and there was never a reason for me to join."

VIOLINIST, FINLAND

2019 participant

She wants to inspire the young musicians she teaches and to promote music to young and older people, cultivating their love for classical music. "I like to take every opportunity I have. I teach and we have a programme in my music school to bring classical music to senior homes. A few of these homes we go to several times a year. They have a piano and we bring the rest of the instruments and we can play anything that we want. Last week I brought my quartet and we played Dvořák. We have a talk about music and sometimes we eat with the elderly as well. It's nice to talk to them. I think this programme brings music closer both to people for whom it is now difficult to go to concerts and to people who never considered going to a concert."

"I have been thinking about expanding my teaching, to get my own students. But it is difficult to find the time. I started helping my mom, she is a music teacher and organises summer camps. The students are between 5 to 11 years old. It is just fun to teach them because they are little and energetic. I also help some of the musicians of the school orchestra. I teach them theory lessons, for which I get paid, and before the concerts that we give once every two months or so. I think teaching is important for my role as an ambassador. It is the most important thing you can do: introduce music to a person at a young age and convey your passion. I would have liked to see young people playing when I was starting out practicing violin, because that motivates. I see myself teaching in the future – not just teaching, but it is something I would like to continue doing."

"I have had an Instagram account for some years now, but I do not really use it. I don't think it's good;

it takes up a lot of time. But I did post about Concertgebouworkest Young on Instagram. I talked to my friends and the people in my school about how much fun it was and what I did in the programme. I have not been able to nominate anybody so far."

"Being an ambassador means to me sharing my passion for music whenever I can. I want to continue with what I am doing, because spreading classical music is such an important goal, and it helps me to play whenever I can. It is a lot of fun to be an ambassador and to work with people. Being an ambassador brings perspective to what you are doing: it is not only for yourself, but also for others, and that improves your playing."

VIOLINIST, POLAND 2022 participant

This alumna was the most hidden participant of the 2022 edition of Young, but she is also a great example of an active ambassador on social media. One could even consider her to be an influencer. During Young 2022, at the age of 14, she recounts her story, "I was four years old when I started playing violin with the Suzuki method. That is a good system to encourage children to practice, but I wasn't planning to become a musician, the lessons and the playing were just for fun. Once my teacher told my mum that my sound was nice and my mum thought 'Yeah, yeah, he surely tells every parent that!' But it turned out differently, and I started doing competitions from the age of 6 or 8 years old. I realised that I love performing on stage and started to take music more serious from the age of 10 or 11. But not long after that, the COVID-19 pandemic changed everything and during the quarantine I really did not feel well. At one point my mum said 'Why don't you get Instagram and follow people that post on classical music?' I first used my account basically to follow others; I watched their practice and rehearsal videos. After a while I started making and posting my own videos too. All this gave me lots of motivation. By now I have around 11,500 followers. One follower was a lady from the USA, a professional musician, with whom I started to exchange some more and now I take online lessons with her. I also met up with friends that I made on Insta, and we gave concerts together in London – I am Polish, but my mother is a British citizen. I also learned about Concertgebouworkest Young on Instagram. In a workshop that was sponsoring my account I met the concertmaster of Young 2021. He nominated me and helped me with the pieces and the recordings. Since I have been accepted to Young, I have been showing every step of the way on the Young-page of my Insta account: the acceptance letter, my trip to the Netherlands, impressions of Akoesticum and the place where we stay, all the different musical activities, the activities on our day off, the food, the parties, everything! If someone thinks of applying for the next edition, they will know exactly what to expect! My Young page gets around 2000 followers. I guess, overall, most followers of my account are already musicians."

5 LIFE AFTER YOUNG

5.1 WHERE ARE THE ALUMNI NOW?

Several alumni maintained, "There is life before Young, and then, there is life after Young!" That is why we were curious to learn in spring 2022 how the alumni had progressed, generally and in terms of education (level and location). The Final Survey on the longer-term effects of Young, sent out to the 2019 and 2020-21 participants, enquired about this. Of the 96 alumni that filled out the survey, 38 per cent were still in secondary school but indicated their intention to apply for a music conservatory afterwards. Another 56 per cent were already studying music at a conservatory or university. On the basis of the names of the music conservatories these alumni mentioned, we can deduce that several participants went abroad to study. This is evident as more conservatories in the Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany and the USA were listed than there were participants from these countries. Conservatories in the Netherlands (in Amsterdam, The Hague and Rotterdam) specifically accepted many Young-alumni, this can be considered a 'Young-effect'. This international movement was also confirmed in the interviews and can be observed in the (social media) network of Young. On the other hand, the interviews revealed that although a move to a conservatory in places such as the Netherlands or Germany was seen as a great step forward in their careers (providing better music education than in some participant countries of origin), not all alumni who were accepted were able to finance this move. This concerned both alumni from inside and outside of the EU, although it was particularly hard for non-EU students who have to pay much higher tuition fees.

Asked if Concertgebouworkest Young had influenced their choice of conservatory, 56 per cent said 'no, it didn't.' The main reasons they gave was that they were studying at this particular conservatory or had already made up their minds before coming to Young. The 44 per cent of the alumni that indicate that Young had influenced their choice gave several reasons: they said Young gave them courage, especially to audition at a foreign conservatory; they believed that they grew musically in Young and that is why they were accepted; one respondent mentioned that the experience in Young made her decide that playing in an orchestra is what she wanted; they were supported to apply at the conservatory by the Young mentors, staff or peers or they met the teacher they wanted to study with through Young; and because through Young, they became familiar with Amsterdam, the Netherlands and the level of music education and liked it!

A few alumni continued playing music but indicated that they would not choose to study a subject related to music after they finished secondary school (2%) or that they had already gone on to study a non-musical subject like biology, chemistry, architecture or bio-dynamic agriculture (4%).

Note that a larger number of participants than might be expected, given the intended age of the Young programme target group, had already finished secondary school. The participants' ages indeed ranged between 14 and 17 years, with an average age of 15,5 years in the first edition of Young and 16 years in the second and third editions. As this was their age at the moment of application, by the time Young Summer School 2021 took place, the talented youth were roughly a year and a half older. Several of them had, in the meantime, finished secondary school and/or been admitted to institutions for higher musical education.

5.2 PORTRAITS

'Life after Young' is also illustrated by portraits of eleven alumni which we interviewed (again) in spring 2022. We present four of these portraits below to show differences in outcome. At the end of this report the portraits bring together all parts of the Young programme that have been addressed separately in the previous chapters. The portrait alumni reflect upon why they thought they were 'hidden talents', the effects of the social and musical programme, and their ambassadorship.

TIMPANIST, SPAIN 2019 participant

He took part in Concertgebouworkest Young 2019, at the age of 16. Now, at 19, he studies at the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Stuttgart, Germany, whilst finishing his bachelor at the

music conservatory in Spain. His plans for the future are not yet clearly defined, but he pictures a combination of work in orchestras, ensembles and teaching at a conservatory – preferably outside of Spain. His wish to work across styles and genres, ranging from old to classical and contemporary music and to work closely with composers is already pronounced.

A hidden talent?

This alumnus is a textbook example of the young musicians Concertgebouwworkest Young aims to target: talented young musicians who could use a little extra support to make it in the field of classical music. At the same time, the story of this young talented timpanist underlines the importance of having a helpful music teacher. He explained in 2019 that he knew how to use his talent to become a professional musician but that his context posed a challenge. He grew up in a small town some 60 kilometres north of Salamanca in a family of labourers, with no musicians in the extended family or connections in the field of classical music, and without the means to afford musical education at a private, expensive music school. His family was supportive in other ways, he said, and luckily, so was the local music teacher. When he was little he would join his sister's rehearsals for the local band, in which she played the flute. He would pass the time by drumming with his hands or sticks on whatever he could get hold of. The bandleader – a teacher with a degree from the music conservatory in Madrid – recognised his talent for percussion and invited him to join the band. There he felt that his peers were not motivated enough to challenge themselves to play at a high level. As his teacher also taught at the Conservatorio Profesional de Música de Zamora, he offered the alumnus a musical trajectory there and soon after encouraged him to apply for the Conservatorio Superior de Música de Castilla y León in Salamanca. The alumnus studied hard, and although he did not expect to pass the exam, he was not only selected for the conservatory, but also nominated as the best percussionist in the province.

Longer-term effects of Young

During Young, this alumnus realised that he wanted to continue studying music outside of Spain. He reflected in winter 2020, 'Without the Spanish public educational system, where I could study almost free of charge, I would not have been able to become a professional musician. But, at the same time, I believe that the system in Spain does not provide good opportunities for musicians, not even after they have become professionals. I would like to leave Spain and become part of an orchestra in Germany or the Netherlands.' In spring 2022 he reconstructed the time that has passed: 'Taking part in Young made me wish to come to Amsterdam to study music. I really loved the vibes of the city when we visited it with Young; it was so different from what I was used to in Spain. Also, my Spanish teachers encouraged me to go to Amsterdam, telling me that the conservatory there is one of the best for orchestra work. So, I auditioned and got accepted. But then the world went into lockdown due to the COVID-19-pandemic, and I did not want to change city, language, my whole life under such circumstances. I decided not to go, but was really very sad about that.' Instead, he continued with his bachelor in Spain, and when the world slowly opened up again, he applied to the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Stuttgart. 'While discussing with my teachers about what to do, I decided that this would be the best place to study for what I want to do now – focusing on solo work and contemporary styles, rather than just orchestra work.' He applied, was accepted and moved to Germany while continuing his bachelor in Spain, which he finished in spring 2022.

Reflecting on his experience in Young, he recalled that it showed him two important things: 'First, it showed me how amazing playing in an orchestra is, but also what 'real orchestra life' is like - how it really works, that you need to know people, teachers, and so on.' Second, he says, 'They showed us in Young that you must find your own way and fight for your dream, and that the dream can be anything: becoming an orchestra musician, a soloist, teacher, conductor or whatever!' He added that he also learned a lot from working closely with the Concertgebouwworkest timpanists. It made him realise that he was always pushing and working hard, but sometimes without a clear concept. He learned that you need to continue developing yourself, but that it is as important to take time off and do other things too. Altogether, he concluded, 'Young gave me more drive, more purpose, more focus. It made me more aware of what it takes to achieve your dream. It does not happen anymore that I look distracted during a piece and that the conductor has to tell me to be present and pay attention, like during Young – although I was and did get my timing right then too!'

VIOLINIST, SERBIA

2019 participant

She was 16 years old when she attended Young Summer School in 2019. In spring 2022, at almost 19, she found herself between music school and a college or music conservatory. Her dream was always

to teach music to children in Serbia, where she believes the quality of music education could be greatly improved and made more widely available. Teaching is a vocation passed on to her by her family, as both her mother and grandmother are music tutors in Serbia. All was clear in this regard, until she took part in Young: 'It helped me completely define what I want: to work in an orchestra, and, later, to become a teacher.' In spring 2022 she reflected on the 'bittersweet experience' Young turned out to be for her, struggling all the while to repress the tears: 'Young was unarguably the best time of my life! It set really high expectations for my professional life. I didn't think that living like that would be possible. That is a good and a bad thing. Young was a high tier programme and I wanted my life to be like that. That is why, after finishing music high school in Belgrade, I applied to the Royal Conservatory in The Hague and was accepted. But, my family and I could not afford the enormous tuition fees for non-EU students combined with the high cost of living in the Netherlands. It would have been impossible to manage the costs without a scholarship, and I haven't been able to get one as they are rare for bachelor programmes. There is nothing more that I want to do, than to move away from my country, to study, to play and to work on my future in music. But I ended up in a forced break after finishing music school in Belgrade.'

A hidden talent?

This violinist was born and raised in a small Serbian town on the border with Bosnia-Herzegovina, a three-hour train ride from the capital city of Belgrade. After her early years of music classes with her mother, she attended music school to study violin in Belgrade. With only a few professional symphony orchestras in Serbia, Belgrade seemed to be the best place for her if she wanted to continue to improve as a musician. Due to the distance and travel time, she and her family decided that she should move to the capital. She was 14 years old when she moved into a dorm with other young girls who had moved to the capital to study. Once in Belgrade, she played in the symphony orchestra of the Mokranjac Music School, the oldest music school in Serbia. As a young girl, she could thus continue developing in classical music by relocating to Belgrade. Not an easy decision, and a 'rough time' it was, as she had to live away from her family and hometown. She was fortunate that her family was able to support this move, something that will not always be the case for talents growing up in small towns or rural areas.

Longer-term effects of Young and ambassadorship

She could not believe her luck when she heard that she was selected for Young Summer School. Shortly after the Summer School, she wrote in an email to the Young-team: 'Thank you so much! You made it possible for us to peek through the window of our musical future lives. It gives me courage and motivation to try to build my life in that direction, so that one day, I am able to have at least a part of that beautiful, fulfilling atmosphere of Young at my workplace.' In similar high spirit, she reflected in the email on the 'bittersweet friendships' that were established in Young: 'I still think it's a bit cruel that you and the programme made us build such strong friendships, and then we had to say goodbye, maybe forever.' Early 2020, she shared, 'Everyone deserves a programme like Young. It gives you wings.' She added, 'Young helped me a lot with my self-awareness as well as my self-confidence, as it really made me feel special and worthy, both as a musician and as a person. My motivation to change things was enormous when I got back home'. This alumna was a textbook example of an ambassador. She wanted to be a role model for young musicians: 'I think that I could be a good role model. I play, I conduct, and I organize, that should offer a good example for someone who seeks inspiration.' Early 2020, just before the pandemic, she summed up the concerts she organised before and her plans for the near future: 'I play in my school's orchestra. I am admitted to the best choir in Serbia, and I started taking conducting classes. On the 23rd of June, the 'Day of Music', I will give a recital in my hometown and help music grow there, because there are almost no musical activities there. If I'll give a concert there every year on this day, it will become a tradition. Because I want all my music activities to be a step towards getting more people interested in classical music. I would like to reach children and people my age, especially, to pass the love for music on to. Last year, I played for children in the rehabilitation hospital in my hometown, maybe they enjoyed the music or maybe I just made their evening a little more pleasant. Together with a good friend and violinist from Bosnia, I am planning a mini tour through Bosnia and Serbia in Summer. We have the support from our parents. We will play the Moszkowski Suite for Two Violins and Piano, and will find a pianist to accompany us. Also, I have been active in my school in Belgrade. One big problem there is the lack of concerts, that is why I organised several informal concerts. Another big problem is the lack of chamber music. Everyone in my music school is just doing solos and orchestras, but not everyone is going to be a soloist. It will be with chamber music that we will earn a living. For this I also want to target the teachers because chamber music deserves appreciation and more time in the curriculum. In the meantime, to make my school more active in chamber music, I started three different ensembles that I am part of myself, like a string quintet and an octet consisting of different people.' This alumna discovered that one idea or event naturally leads to the next, but she found that the professional music

environment in Belgrade was not always open to her enthusiasm. Soon after she had her wings clipped by the COVID-19-pandemic.

'A post-Young hidden-talent depression'

Over time her high spirits were increasingly hard to keep up, as her native context started to weigh down on her with growing force, aided by the pandemic. She explained in spring 2022, 'Until mid-August 2021, I still was still waiting for a miracle that would make me be able to move to the Netherlands, but when I realised that it was not going to happen, I didn't practise at all until December. It was too painful. After finishing school in Belgrade, I had to move back to my native town where there is no musical infrastructure. It was hard adapting to my reality in Serbia, as that high tier level is hard to find in Serbia; the difference between what I experience here and in Young was and is sometimes devastating. Also seeing posts and photo's on social media from all my friends of Young, who are studying music in The Hague, or in other places I would die for to be in, was and is really hard. In the beginning of 2022, I had to pick myself up to start playing and to get back into shape again. I have been playing at home by myself, without a teacher; I have no idea how good it is. I have applied to the music conservatory of Ljubljana, Slovenia, where they do not charge a tuition fee to people from ex-Yugoslavian countries. I figured that at least there I am in the EU, and will find out from there how to further work my way into Europe towards high-end music conservatories. I am also taking the entry exam for the conservatory in Belgrade in June in case they reject me in Slovenia. Being a Young participant showed me what I want my professional and social life to look like, and even though it looks distant from where I stand currently, I will do my best to get as close to it as I can. Who knows how long it will take? It's my dream and if Young taught me one thing, it's to believe in yourself and to follow your dreams.'

'Waiting at the airport in Amsterdam for my flight home after Young Summer School 2019, I wrote to my fellow Young musicians "May the applause from the Concertgebouw shine in your hearts for the rest of your lives to remind you where it all started." Now, in spring 2022, I am working really hard not to let things end there. If I would have been born just a few kilometres to the north, I would have been Croatian and thus an EU-citizen, and I would not have been stuck like I am now.' Reflecting again on who is, and who is not, a hidden talent – the type of talents Concertgebouwworkest Young aims to support, she remarked, 'The Island Game we played during Young Summer School, which taught us about privilege, was too much for me personally. I was already very aware of which island I belong to, given my origin. Privilege is not only related to belonging to the cultural majority in a country. I guess the different experiences of the participants since Young Summer School demonstrate that more than about cultural affiliation or skin colour, being disadvantaged is socioeconomic in nature. And privilege is about being born in the right place in the world—I mean, in the EU where music education is of high quality and affordable for EU-citizens, instead of just outside of it. Serbia has been on the EU-candidates list for a while now, but given recent developments, like the war in the Ukraine, I doubt if Serbia will ever make it beyond its candidate status. I have really been suffering from a deep motivational crisis due to the aftermath of Young, the consequences of the war, and Corona has robbed me of two crucial years of my life.'

The window to the future is re-opened

As we did not want to end her story on a negative note, we agreed to talk again after the summer break, when it the results of the auditions in Ljubljana and Belgrade would be clear. When we spoke in September 2022, this young talented musician was about to leave for Ljubljana to start her studies at the conservatory and to move in with her father, who lives there. She was over the moon: not only has she been accepted in both cities, but she was also first on the list of the Belgrade conservatory. What is more, the Ljubljana conservatory appeared to strongly support international exchanges, meaning that she might be able to study for a year in another EU country as part of her three-year Slovenian bachelor. Looking back to the emotionally-rough year that she had now left behind, she observed, 'I guess I was blinded by Young. It was the first time ever that I auditioned and I got accepted, that made things look so easy. But the EU is a fortress, I was not aware yet how unavailable it is to people from outside. That really hit me hard. I was only sixteen, what did I know really? But I think it was necessary to leave my violin gathering dust in the corner of my room for six months. I needed that time as I was exhausted, emotionally and physically. But I came out stronger, I feel brave and proud now, I got myself back on track without a teacher, and somehow also my playing has improved because of it. People notice a different tone and colour to my playing. And, most importantly, I enjoy playing so much more now. I can be more appreciative of myself, happier with how I performed, for instance, in a concert. Before, I never thought I played good enough, found it difficult to accept the mistakes I made. I have learned to keep a general, long-term goal in mind, and to trust the process a little more, rather than to get first fixated on a specific short-term goal and then disappointed, because miracles never happen when you need them to! I look to the future with confidence, I will grab every chance Ljubljana offers me, and from there I will further find my way in the field of classical music. No matter what, I am here to stay!'

VIOLINIST, GREAT BRITAIN

2019 participant

She took part in Concertgebouworkest Young in 2019 at the age of 15. At the time she was already a student of the Royal College of Music Junior Department (RCM JD), a Saturday school programme, where she studied violin, classical guitar, composition and conducting. She has a long history of playing in orchestras. In 2019, for example, she was the concertmaster of the Sinfonia Orchestra at the Royal College of Music, and took part in a number of other orchestras and musical organisations, such as the Surrey County Youth Orchestra and Chineke! Junior Orchestra. She was a Junior Artist with the London Philharmonic Orchestra from 2019-2020. In Spring 2022, she was concertmaster of the Chamber Orchestra and third seat in the Symphony Orchestra. In several orchestras she has had the chance to perform and to conduct. When we talked to her in spring 2022, she was preparing for her A-level (secondary school) exams. She had applied for, and was conditionally offered, a place to study Music at Cambridge University and had also been accepted by three English conservatories. Among other things, she was offered a full scholarship by the Royal College of Music. She had to decide after her exams which course to take. This was a tough decision, as the appealing academic path would mean less focus on performance than at the conservatories and she would then have to take lessons privately. Tough also, because her dream for the future is a varied career: she would like to perform as a soloist and/or as a musician in chamber orchestras, and as a conductor, and she would like to be an advocate for music, for instance as a music journalist or an educator. Checking in again in September 2022 to hear about the outcome, she told us that Cambridge University was happy to have her and that is where she decided to go.

A hidden talent?

She found before coming to Young that she knew how to use her talent to become a professional musician. Her teacher was helpful and her family could afford professional music education. But there were challenges as well. She elaborated, 'I'm British born, my grandparents are Pakistani-Bengali, and I am Muslim. British orchestras rarely include Muslim musicians.' She talked about the everyday racism she experienced in the past when people expressed surprise on learning of her talent and praised her for being a 'Pakistani musician'. Sharing her experiences with the Young 2019-participants was important for her and enriched the social component of the programme and the participants' understanding of privilege. In a broader sense, too, she believed that her being part of Young might inspire other young musicians with comparable experiences – one of Concertgebouworkest Young's aims: 'I think that as an ambassador I can help people to love classical music. And I feel that more people in my image would take up an instrument if they saw people like me as role models. I think when people see me, they feel confident that they can do it as well.'

Ambassadorship

She remarked that restricting classical music to those who can afford it creates a social class divide which naturally impacts disadvantaged, poorer and ethnic minority communities. In 2019, she wrote, 'I myself really want to succeed in music, either as a musician or as someone who promotes classical music to society, so I will change or adapt in any way that I can to achieve my goal!' She is aware that she has the skills and would like to be a leader; she wants to create a big community of young musicians and to motivate people to play and appreciate classical music. She explained, 'Classical music has been around for a long time, but we are at a point where less people are studying classical music and becoming musicians. In the end, there will be less offer of classical music and less people liking classical music. Therefore, we need to keep classical music important for people and create a bigger audience.' To this end, on returning from Young Summer School, she set up Tutti (tuttimusicians.co.uk), an organisation and string ensemble that aims to produce high-quality music and to broaden audiences by, for instance, giving (free) concerts such as the Christmas concerts Tutti held in her village in 2019. She handled all aspects related to Tutti. 'In 2019, the fifteen members of the ensemble were between 13 and 17 years old and attended London specialist music schools. I recruited them, selecting people who would benefit more. I planned the concerts, booked the spaces, advertised the concerts, and coordinated the rehearsals. Some of the players supported me, as did the director of the junior program at the Royal School of Music – Tutti's patron. I have learned that it is a lot of work to run this organisation. Things like coordinating and leading a group of musicians are not so easy! But I feel that the time spent in Young helped to improve my leadership skills. Young changed me and inspired me to become more proactive, also as an ambassador.'

More than for other Young-participants, to this alumna ambassadorship explicitly means increasing young audiences for classical music and bringing classical music to diverse ethnic communities and socio-economically underprivileged groups. In early 2020 she said, 'What I want to do in the future is to

have more concerts with more musicians, and to include more musicians from diverse backgrounds, as I haven't encountered many in the contexts where I studied. I would like to raise funds to be able to book bigger concert halls and to promote the Tutti ensemble more. I want to bring music to young children, since the government has drastically cut down funding for arts in state schools in England. With Tutti we could work in underfunded primary schools, for instance, in crime areas. The best way to involve people is to have them interact; we could make a choir and create a small performance. But in England there are many regulations, like you have to be 18 to do that.'

She was a notably promising ambassador, but had to put many ideas and initiatives on ice or to cancel them altogether. Both the COVID-19-pandemic and Brexit were complicating factors: 'I had a concert organised for December 2020, and then the whole country was in lockdown again and everything got cancelled. Tutti was asked to play at the concert hall of the Royal College of Music in October 2020. My plan for that was to get Young-musicians over to do a joint concert. As musicians it is very important to keep close ties. Not only Corona but Brexit too made that difficult, as they now had to pay for their visas. Once I have decided where I will be going next year, I can start organising again – either picking things up again with RCM or finding new ways in Cambridge.'

In 2021, the Concertgebouwkest commissioned her to compose a piece and invited her to the Netherlands to conduct the second Young-group in a chamber music concert. During one of the online meetings for the 2020-21 group that preceded the Summer School, she spoke to participants about her Tutti ensemble and ambassador activities and gave a kind of "ambassador webinar": 'Everything starts with an idea', she said, 'Find the "problem" in your area, for instance, there might not be a music school or not enough people playing music. Then think about how much time you want to spend on it and focus on doing little things: a demonstration of your instrument, playing at a community centre. For me it is crucial to get children involved. When children grow up with classical music, then they will teach this to their children as well.'

Longer-term effects of Young

Young was the first European programme that she took part in. She wrote in spring 2022, 'I really enjoyed Young. It was the most significant experience I have ever had. It completely changed how I communicated with people, the nature of my friendships and how I approached music. It also shaped my technical skills, especially due to the expertise of the coaches and the conductor.' She elaborated, 'Before Young, I had not met many other young musicians from outside the UK. That was a broadening experience: so many people playing with different styles, all the differences between countries and in individuals, that helped me break away from the mould that I was used to in the UK. It was exciting to learn how to unite all the different sounds in the concerts. We were also learning bits of other people's languages, everyone's culture was able to come through and I could build meaningful friendships; the atmosphere during Young was really relaxed from the offset. Other programmes I have been in, were often more restrictive. They would last only three days or had a very tight programme, so that you would focus on playing and your own instrument section and I often ended up having met with only a small number of people. That does not mean that the Young programme was not intense! But the space in Ede was big, the programme offered enough room for recreational activities and it even accommodated our getting to know one another in the workshops and social activities.' She added, 'What made it special was that there were many individuals, but it was not about money or personal gain, just about the music. And Lili and Esther and the mentors all cared about what they were doing, they were not just doing their job, we were not just numbers to them. It was lovely to sit down with them and have a conversation, feeling that they really liked to get to know you!' About her changed approach to music, she said, 'Before Young I would focus on trying to get something perfect, for instance, by focusing on a particular bar and working towards achieving the correct speed. I wasn't looking at the bigger picture. In Young I could broaden the lens, because there was more time, and because we would run through entire movements multiple times in the rehearsals. That helped building the stamina to play it, but it also made me hear the music and how it is meant to sound, and how there are links throughout the entire piece. In the sectionals we could then get into the particulars and the technique.'

BASS TROMBONIST, PORTUGAL

2020-21 participant

He was 18 years old when he attended Young Summer School in 2021. During Young he received his acceptance letter from the Escola Superior de Música de Lisboa, in Portugal, stating that he could start studying bass trombone at this music conservatory in October 2021. That is where he was, at the age of almost 19, when we talked in spring 2022. His dream is to become a trombonist in a professional



(symphony) orchestra, and he would like to teach: 'It is such a pity that classical music is not so popular among young people. I feel it is my duty to pass it on, otherwise it will die out.' After Young Summer School, he sees further ways of making music that he would like to develop: 'I got ideas from Young and the workshop by Musicians Without Borders; it was inspiring to be making music with your body. Smart and creative. I would like to do similar things, like inventing instruments for instance with sticks.'

A hidden talent?

Before attending Young Summer School, he pointed out that he could use some help to advance his career in the field of classical music, just as Concertgebouworkest Young intended. He felt he had the potential to become a professional musician and that his teacher was helpful. But, up until then, he had only played in local wind ensembles and in his school's chamber music orchestra. Young gave him the opportunity to play in a symphonic orchestra for the first time. He felt that his visibility was further limited by the fact that he hadn't yet won any music prizes, and that his chances might be curbed by a lack of a network in the field of classical music. He grew up in a town near Porto, in a family of non-musicians. In spring 2022, he shared: 'Young gave me the courage to apply abroad. I did indeed audition and was admitted to the Royal Conservatory in The Hague, The Netherlands. But I couldn't make it in the end due to financial reasons and started at the music conservatory in Lisbon instead. After I have finished my studies here, I might go and do a master abroad.'

The intensity of the social experience in Young

Asked about the long-term effects of taking part in the Concertgebouworkest Young programme, he answered a little reluctantly: 'Personally, I do not know what would be different. I did not have the chance to apply what I learned musically yet.' But then he said, less hesitantly, 'I still miss everyone! Young Summer School was amazing! It is impossible to forget the concerts, the time I spent with friends, and all that I learned from the Concertgebouworkest musicians and from the workshop by Musicians Without Borders. It was all so inspiring! I still talk with the others in our Young 2021 WhatsApp group. We met the group of Young 2019 during the production of the video in which we performed an excerpt of Beethoven's 9th symphony. Then we also talked a bit about our experiences and these turned out to be the same for both editions: We all thought Young was amazing!'

He continued explaining that he had attended several other music programmes before coming to the Netherlands, but that none of them really compared to Young: 'These other programmes were almost all wind orchestra camps in Portugal. Not only were there just wind instruments, I already knew many people who took part in the camps. In Young there was the full sound of the symphonic orchestra and everybody was new to me, including the other musicians from Portugal. With people from so many countries, I got to know so many new cultures and new personalities. We were all different, but all into music. In the town where I grew up, I was the only kid playing music. Some other kids did play music too, but that was mainly because their parents made them! Now that I am studying in the music conservatory, it has become more normal to be surrounded by people who live for music. But that was a new and an amazing experience in Young! And what is more, in spite of language differences, we could understand each other through music. It was a game changer.' Again, comparing, 'In other programmes, you would wake up, work on repertoire, socialise a bit and that is it. In Young we did all of that too, but there was so much more: the chamber music sessions, the programme by the United World Colleges, the workshop by Musicians Without Borders, the buddy groups and so on. I remember that some days, when there was free time, we would all join in all kinds of dances and songs typical of the countries we are from, like doing a Polish dance or singing a specific Christmas song. We had lot of parties at night, eating spring rolls at 10 pm. All these things together turned Young into an intense, social and unique experience.'

But it was the moment during our conversation when he realised that Young Summer School started nine months ago that triggered him and set him off talking, further illustrating the intensity of the social experience in Young: 'Nine months! It feels like 2 weeks ago! I think Young changed me, also emotionally. What made me change was the last day of the Summer School, after the final concert when everyone would be leaving the next morning. In the other music programmes and camps that I attended, we would be saying "normal goodbyes", but in Young it felt like everyone was crying. Everyone was really so sad to be leaving. I remember that I was crying for half an hour on the bus back from the concert in Cologne. And you know, all the crying stopped only at 8 or 9 pm. That's how impactful it was! Leaving was a like getting a knife in the back. Then the next day, when I returned to Portugal and saw the bridge that is iconic for the place where I grew up, I didn't feel happy at all seeing it like I normally do. We all wanted Young to continue.' Even in spring 2022, he did not want the Young experience to stop and remained committed to the programme: 'One of the violinists of Young 2020-21 and me came up with the idea for "Re-Young", a summer camp organised by Young alumni. But that will be really hard for us to realise.'

Instead, maybe we could have a Zoom-call during one of the workshops of Young Summer School 2022 to talk about the experiences we had, or we could have a Zoom-call during one of the sectionals in which we could give some tips, or we could come over to conduct a piece. *That's just it, I miss you guys!*



