



Dear Friends of YONA,

Temperatures in Namibia are gradually dropping after a hot summer, and the first quarter of 2024 is already over.

YONA opened for students on 22 January. We received many new applications, and all our staff worked very hard to ensure that every child has a time slot of instrumental, theory and 'Keynote' classes.

Youth Orchestras of Namibia/YONA is now in its 8th year, and we continue to provide music education to children, regardless of their race, gender, tribe or socio-economic status.

A SAD FAREWELL

On 4 February, Namibians were greeted with the sad news that our president, His Excellency Dr. Hage Geingob, had passed away. This news also affected the YONA community deeply. Many of our students and teachers had opportunities to pay their respects by playing at memorial services. These included performances at the official residence of the president, at community memorial services and at schools. Special mention goes to our violin teacher, Ronaldo Kandume, who has been working very hard, playing at these events, arranging opportunities for our ensembles to perform, and helping to organize our memorial service at YONA. We are truly grateful for the important contribution that President Geingob has made through the years, to create a free and prosperous Namibia.

EVENTS AND PERFORMANCES

Our senior string ensemble's first performance of the year was at a cocktail event for the senior international management of B2Gold, at Olivia's.

On 16 March, the senior strings performed for the first time at The Grove Mall Namibia. Our heartfelt thanks go to the management of The Grove Mall, and to Bank Windhoek, who sponsored this performance.

YONA's senior orchestra, (woodwind players included), performed at an event of the Lithon Foundation at The Village Opera House.

At all of these corporate events, we had to rely on our young musicians to act professionally and play beautifully. They did not disappoint, and we are so very proud of them!

On 5 April we had a very successful cello ensemble concert at the Oude Rust Retirement home, and on 7 April, a cello quartet treated the guests at Farm Krumhuk with a beautiful performance.

Two of our young cellists have been chosen to play as soloists with the Namibian National Symphony Orchestra on 13 – 15 April at the Baroque Festival. As usual, there are also quite a few YONA musicians participating as orchestra members.

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

For the 3rd consecutive year, Dorothea Bronner, a retired cello teacher from Germany, has been teaching at YONA for the months of January to April. We are also excited about our new Namibian cello teacher; Muinee Kasuvire, who will continue to good work when Dorothea leaves.

Sadly, Miemie van der Westhuizen, recorder teacher at YONA's main centre, is unable to continue at YONA, due to other work commitments. However, our other teachers, volunteers and staff are continuing the good work.

It is always very helpful when community members volunteer to help YONA with non-musical tasks. Namasiku Nalisa has been helping YONA organise and fundraise for our performance at The Grove Mall, and for the Busk-a-Thon. We are so privileged to have someone who is willing to fight our cause so selflessly.

Dorothea Ockert, a double bass player from Leipzig, Germany, has taken it upon herself to raise funds, find donors for instruments, and to arrange the transport of these instruments to Namibia. Currently she and her husband, Christian, also provide storage space for the growing number of double basses, celli, violas and violins. This is a huge undertaking, and we appreciate what she does immensely. Soon, with the help of the Goethe Institut, the instruments will be transported to Namibia. We can't wait!

BUSK-A-THON

Since January, our students have been preparing for the Busk-a-Thon, which is scheduled for 27 April. A Busk-a-Thon is a festival of street music: something between 'busking' and a marathon. We plan to carry on playing for at least five hours, at two open spaces in the city centre. YONA's string, woodwinds and recorder ensembles will get an opportunity to perform at this event. There is opportunity for corporate donors to sponsor different time slots, and the public will also be able to give cash donations. We trust that this will be a fun event for the whole family, which can raise public awareness about YONA.

Please contact namasiku@yonamibia.org if you or your company would like to sponsor a time slot at this event.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

YONA is ever grateful for the generosity of all our individual sponsors who continue to donate to YONA every month.

We also would like to thank RMB, through the FirstRand Namibia Foundation Trust, Stichting Horizon, B2Gold, Gondwana Care Trust, and DNG (Deutsch-Namibische Gesellschaft) for continuing to sponsor YONA in 2024.

80% of our students cannot afford to pay lesson fees, and to these children, YONA provides instruments, lesson fees, transport and food. Learning to play an instrument provides countless benefits to young people. We have so many highly talented students who are unable to pay lesson fees. They would not have been able to follow their dreams if it weren't for your generosity.

On behalf of everyone at YONA, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

Kind regards,

Gretel Coetzee

Director of YONA



BUSK-A-THON

27 APRIL 10:00 – 14:00
A MARATHON OF SYMPHONIC STREET MUSIC
BY YOUTH ORCHESTRAS OF NAMIBIA

**OLD MUTUAL TOWERS
INDEPENDENCE AVENUE**

PLEASE DONATE TO SUPPORT OUR WORK

