



Press Release

Tuesday 4 June 2024

## Applications open for Overture: the Royal Ballet and Opera's orchestra mentorship in collaboration with Black Lives in Music and National Open Youth Orchestra

Today, **Tuesday 4 June 2024**, applications open for **Overture**, the Royal Ballet and Opera's orchestra mentoring programme, in collaboration with **Black Lives in Music** and the **National Open Youth Orchestra**.

Established in 2023 by the **Orchestra of the Royal Opera House**, Overture provides tailored opportunities for young musicians aged 18-25 years who currently encounter barriers in their musical training.

Each Season musicians are partnered with a member of the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden, London, and mentored throughout the 2024/25 Season. Applications are open to those who identify as being from an underrepresented group, including (but not limited to), global majority, Disabled, LGBTQ+, and from a low-socio economic background, and play one of the offered instruments. See full list on the website. The deadline for the first stage of applications is **Monday 1 July 2024**.

**Lucy Irving, a clarinet mentee in the 2022/23 Season said:** 'When I was accepted onto the **Overture** programme it gave me a huge confidence boost, and it has been a real privilege to be taught by someone who has been in the industry for so long. Through Principal Bass Clarinet Marina Finnermore's expert mentorship, I have really developed as a musician. She has made me

think more deeply about my breathing and support whilst playing, the shape of the music, and the overall sound quality that I produce. This great advice has led to a really noticeable difference in my playing.'

Opportunities will be tailored to each individual and will include side by side rehearsal sessions playing alongside members of the OROH across ballet and opera productions, audition preparation, private rehearsals and pastoral support from Black Lives in Music and National Open Youth Orchestra.

**Roger Wilson, Director of Operations, Black Lives in Music said:** 'Black Lives in Music are thrilled to be working with the Royal Opera House on Overture. This is a fantastic opportunity to work closely with world class musicians and staff from one of the world's grand opera houses. It's been great to see the impact the initiative has already made, but equally, we know that Overture can very positively touch the lives of so many more aspiring young musicians. I'm excited to see the launch of the next cohort and wholeheartedly look forward to meeting the musicians who will be taking part. We hope to see as many young people as possible applying, it's a unique opportunity.'

**Koen Kessels, Music Director of The Royal Ballet said:** 'It's truly wonderful to bring together young musicians with the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House to make music. Exploring ballet and opera repertoire in this way – and working with exceptional dancers from the Royal Ballet – is an exciting and inspirational opportunity for everyone involved. Our mentees really learn the importance of connecting with other musicians in the Orchestra, the conductor and the dancers on stage, whilst our mentors enjoy sharing their expertise and passing on their knowledge to the next generation. It's great to see everyone joining together to create this wonderful artform.'

**Antonio Pappano, Music Director of The Royal Opera said:** 'The Royal Ballet and Opera is known for its development and support of young artists and that very much includes the Orchestra. Talent development is something that I have always been passionate about and I loved working with those in the inaugural year of Overture alongside our wonderful musicians. I would encourage anyone eligible to apply and I look forward to seeing the next generation of opera orchestral musicians have flourishing careers.'

For more information and to apply, visit [www.roh.org.uk/about/orchestra/orchestra-mentorship](http://www.roh.org.uk/about/orchestra/orchestra-mentorship)

## ENDS

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Images are available [here](#)

### NOTES TO EDITORS:

Opportunities will be tailored to each individual and will include

- Induction day and meet and greet with artists of the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House
- Support from a mentor, including six lessons with a focus on preparing excerpts from opera and ballet music
- Side-by-side sessions, playing alongside members of the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, with a focus on opera and ballet repertoire
- A mock audition to help with future applications
- Opportunities to watch rehearsals
- Access to a private rehearsal and a backstage tour of the Royal Opera House
- Ticket to a dress rehearsal (usually only available to members of the Royal Opera House)
- External pastoral support from Black Lives in Music and National Open Youth Orchestra
- Reimbursement for travel and meal expenses

Instruments accepted are: Violin, Viola, Cello, Flute, Clarinet, Horn, Trumpet, Percussion

### PRESS CONTACT

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## **About The Royal Opera**

The Royal Opera, under the artistic direction of Director of Opera, Oliver Mears and Music Director Designate, Jakub Hrůša, is one of the world's leading opera companies. Based at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, it brings together the greatest singers of our time alongside the most exciting voices of the future; the Royal Opera Chorus, a world-class orchestra and leading conductors, directors and creative teams to share inspiring theatrical experiences with diverse audiences worldwide. Across the Main Stage and the Linbury Theatre, the Company is renowned for both its award-winning performances of repertory works and for commissioning new works by today's leading opera composers, such as George Benjamin, Mark-Anthony Turnage, Thomas Adès and the late Kaija Saariaho.

## **About the Royal Ballet and Opera**

At the Royal Ballet and Opera, we are making the extraordinary for everyone. Inspiring imagination and igniting emotion. We are a cultural powerhouse, bringing together two worldclass performing companies in one of the UK's leading arts institutions. Based at the Royal Opera House in the heart of London's Covent Garden, our work is enjoyed by audiences in our two theatres and globally through our streaming platform, cinema Season and company tours. Our work in schools and communities up and down the country is driven by our curriculum linked programmes, specially designed to inspire creativity, broaden participation and diversify the future of opera and ballet. These sit alongside industry-leading talent development projects, regional partnerships, and a raft of daytime events, family activities, tours, exhibitions and concerts in our Covent Garden home. We are also expanding our audience through our flagship Young ROH scheme and are committed to reducing our impact on the environment and aim to achieve net zero emissions by 2035