



NATIONAL YOUTH JAZZ ORCHESTRA

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Dear Katrina,

Thank you so much for your message. We were so sorry to hear of your father's passing - we know how passionate he was about promoting jazz and supporting young and local artists. He will be sorely missed by the jazz industry.

We are touched that your family has chosen to remember Chris by inviting donations to NYJO. Thank you, thank you thank you to all your donors for their generosity, which will indeed help us to advocate for young jazz talent.

I hope I can illustrate how we will make use of this donation by giving you a few examples of our current work in the North East, though sadly Wakefield itself escapes our calendar at the time of writing :

- NYJO's main band of emerging professionals will be performing at Middlesbrough Jazz Weekender on 20 October, where they will perform the world premiere of a new commission by Nikki Iles, and a second performance of recent commissions by Laura Jurd
- alongside this performance we will be working with Pete Churchill on the Teeside Big Sing and with young musicians at Egglecliffe School, Stockton-on-Tees
- We have been running a 'NYJO Regional Academy' in Darlington in partnership with Durham Music Service since January 2018. This long-term project is helping to teach members of the local youth jazz band membership to improvise, to open up more opportunities in jazz for those young musicians, and supporting the local band leader to develop their own skills in jazz leadership
- Our 'battle-cry' for the next 4 years is 'Levelling the Playing-Field in Jazz Education' - acknowledging that while some parts of the country offer a great jazz education to all their local young people, other places do not have a well-developed jazz infrastructure which means the young people in their area are missing out on the chance to play jazz, and jazz is missing out on their artistic voices! As I'm sure you and your father will have appreciated, jazz education in some places is driven by the energy and passion of a few individuals. We are working with Music Education Hubs across the country where we find cold-spots, to ensure that jazz education is embedded in their work and that those passionate jazz educators are properly supported to help all their young students to reach their potential in jazz.

Again, we are truly honoured that Chris and the family have chosen to remember NYJO. We hope our work to develop the next generation of jazz musicians will do his memory proud. Thank you.

Debbie Forwood
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