



Antigua & Barbuda Youth Symphony Orchestra
c/o Government House
Independence Avenue,
St. John's, Antigua, W.I.



E-mail: info@abyso.org



Website: www.abyso.org

Monday 30th June 2025, Atlanta, Georgia... ABYSO and the Atlanta Music Project Build on New Partnership



Twelve musicians from the Antigua and Barbuda Youth Symphony Orchestra (ABYSO) have participated in the Atlanta Music Project (AMP) Senior Youth Orchestra Summer Tour in the United States. The AMP operates in under-resourced communities to provide world-class music training and performance opportunities that support youth growth and development believing that the pursuit of musical excellence leads to the development of confidence, creativity and ambition, bringing together youth, family and community for the greater good.

Following the launch of a new partnership with AMP in April 2025 which saw eight AMP tutors and musicians travel to Antigua to participate in the ABYSO, inspire Youth Choir and Kanneh-Masons' Playing to Inspire 7 Concert, the ABYSO was thrilled to accept the offer for its musicians to join this 10-day Summer Tour in June 2025.



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The ABYSO joined musicians from AMP, the Metropolitan Youth Symphony Orchestra and the Spartanburg Philharmonic Youth Orchestra to rehearse and perform in two concerts in Atlanta, Georgia and Spartanburg, South Carolina. The rehearsals were led by Maestro Boris Cepeda, a distinguished German pianist and conductor and founder of the European Piano Academy and the Richard Wagner Society of Atlanta. He was supported by Jordan Christopher Owen, conducting fellow with the Spartanburg Philharmonic for the 2024-25 season.

The ABYSO musicians engaged in intense rehearsals covering repertoire which included Finlandia by Jean Sibelius, Ballade for Orchestra by the black British composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor and Danzon No 2, by Mexican composer Arturo Marquez. The rehearsals included sectionals and chamber music.

The ABYSO musicians were violinists Anaiah Francis, Aria Tulloch and Fayth Moses; violists Amari Cornelius and Da'Quan Christopher, cellists Alycia Allie and Sa'Kyah Leadeatte, double bassist Draeden Gibbs, clarinettist Zende Hazelwood, flautist Janbunee Maynard, oboist Ja'Quan Christopher and trombonist Gianna Calliste.

Chaperones were the ABYSO Inspire Youth Choir Director Adrienne Henry and Operations Officer Cortez Jeremiah supported by the ABYSO Health and Safety Officer Dr Cherie Tulloch.

Zende Hazelwood described his experience as follows, "During our time rehearsing with AMP, I have learned much more material and many more techniques and notes on my clarinet which ultimately improved my skill. I also made new friends and most importantly, I had fun and enjoyed my stay".

Speaking of the visit, Mrs Henry noted: "AMP conductors and tutors have indicated how impressed they are with the ABYSO musicians. They represented with excellence! Hotel staff, bus drivers and their fellow musicians from AMP expressed deep admiration for their courtesy and intelligence".

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Special thanks are extended to ABYSO supporters Miguel and Suki DeBreganza for connecting the ABYSO and AMP and for supporting this visit. Thanks also to AMP CEO and Co-Founder, Dantes Rameau and Co-Founder and Chief Programme Officer, Aisha Moody for opening their programme and hearts to the ABYSO.

The ABYSO operates year-round, after school programmes for young people at all levels of instrumental or choral learning, from beginners to seniors. Public performances throughout the year showcase the young people's hard work and talent, ranging from orchestral standards to musical theatre shows and intimate chamber events. Exciting international partnerships bring world class musicians, composers and conductors to work alongside the young musicians, while traineeships bring new or enhanced skills such as instrument repair to the islands. ABYSO is a registered non-profit organisation served by an eleven-member Board of volunteers drawn from the arts, business and philanthropic communities.

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