

PRESS RELEASE
2 January 2020



The Benedetti Foundation Orchestra releases Mascagni's *Intermezzo* from *Cavalleria Rusticana* on Decca Classics

Available digitally worldwide from 3 January 2020

On 3 January 2020 Nicola Benedetti and her Foundation Orchestra release Mascagni's *Intermezzo* from *Cavalleria Rusticana* digitally worldwide on Decca Classics. The Benedetti Foundation is grateful to Decca for its support.

The work is one of the pieces the young people attending the Foundation's workshops – The Benedetti Sessions – are learning and the very first sessions kick off this weekend in Glasgow. The Foundation Orchestra represents every aspect of the music world including young players, amateur musicians, professional string teachers, college students, and all variations in between. The Foundation is committed to pulling these groups together, again and again throughout the year, to experience music making that shows no generational, professional or cultural boundaries.

The first workshops will take place in Glasgow (3 – 6 January), London (10 – 12 January) and Dundee (6 – 8 March). Across the three weekends, the Benedetti Foundation will reach just shy of 3,000 young people and 350 teachers, ranging from non-musicians, to beginner string players and the most promising young musicians. Participants are attending from across the UK stretching from Shetland to the Isle of Wight. In Scotland there are young musicians from 30 of the 32 local authorities with 81% state educated in Glasgow and 70% state educated in Dundee. 30 of the 32 London boroughs are represented with 64% of participants state educated.

Each of The Benedetti Sessions will cater for all playing abilities with workshops for Beginner String Orchestra; Intermediate String Orchestra and Advanced String Orchestra. There will also be a General Musicianship morning for beginners; String Teachers Professional Development Weekend for instrumental string teachers; Primary Classroom Teachers Professional Development Workshop for non-specialist primary classroom teachers and a Primary Schools Workshop Session introducing pupils to the fundamentals of music.

Nicola Benedetti commented, 'It was a beautiful and hugely revelatory experience, bringing together people from literally all walks of music-making life. We are victims of too many categories - young and old, professional and amateur, teachers and performers – but actually, the collective feeling and sound broke all stereotypes and allowed for one of the most positive, relaxing yet engaging musical environments I've experienced.'

Music is the art of all the things we can't see or touch. It is feelings and thoughts, offerings of generosity, vulnerability and openness. It addresses us, communicates and passes invisible things from people creating sound to people receiving sound. It has the power to capture us, to make us feel many complex things. It can lift us high into optimism and accompany us during feelings of hurt and pain. The making of music can be described as healing, invigorating, exhausting and all-consuming. It brings millions together through the basic act of listening and thousands together through the act of making melody, rhythm and harmony in the practice and service of collective expression. This is what the Benedetti Foundation wants young people to experience and share.

Violinist Nicola Benedetti is one of the world's leading advocates for quality music education, the role of arts and culture in the wider community and the transformational effect it has on all young people. She has been committed to education projects since the age of 15 and in the past 12 months, Nicola has worked with over **2,000 students** and **500 teachers**.

The Benedetti Foundation will strive to unite the world of music education through uncovering and sharing its best practices, and celebrating its greatest advocates. We will create explosive, life changing experiences around mass musical events for teachers and young people, that are dedicated to music participation on all levels, with timeless and profound music at their heart. Our ultimate destination is an empowered society that is more creative, enlightened and fulfilled. The Benedetti Foundation is fiercely devoted towards pulling together individuals and organisations that too often work in isolation. It will also produce a signature series of orchestra-based weekend workshops – The Benedetti Sessions - to address, equally, the needs of young musicians and of teachers. www.benedettifoundation.org

Images of Nicola can be downloaded here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/qu4hjq5bojedpg/AACupz84jzKZGwkyDxkFJbb-a?dl=0>

Link to the trailer: <https://youtu.be/62BljqPB-hM>

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Notes to Editors

The Benedetti Sessions

Glasgow Sessions: 3 - 6 January 2020

Venue: Glasgow Royal Concert Hall and RSNO Centre

In partnership with: Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, UNESCO City of Music and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra

London Sessions: 10 - 12 January 2020

Venue: Southbank Centre

In partnership with: Southbank Centre

Dundee Sessions: 6 - 8 March 2020

Venue: Caird Hall

In partnership with: Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Caird Hall, and generously supported by Quilter Cheviot and Leisure & Culture Dundee

About Nicola Benedetti

Over the last 12 months Nicola has continued her role as a dedicated, passionate ambassador and leader in music education:

- Nicola has reached over 2000 young people through workshops, masterclasses, partnership projects, and school visits.
- Nicola has also connected with over 500 teachers, providing support in the face of mounting pressures, and encouraging best practice.
- This commitment to supporting music practitioners was underlined in July 2018, when Nicola took over as President of the European String Teachers Association.
- Nicola has contributed to campaigns to save and preserve music services across the country
- She holds named positions in several of the UK's most established and high-quality youth music organisations including the National Children's Orchestras, Sistema Scotland, National Youth Orchestras of Scotland, Music in Secondary Schools Trust, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and many more.
- As 'Big Sister' to Sistema Scotland, Nicola led Super String Sessions in autumn 2018, celebrating the organisation's 10th anniversary by bringing together 500 young people from a diverse range of learning backgrounds including through Sistema Scotland, Local Authorities and private tuition.
- Fiercely committed to music education and to developing young talent, Nicola has formed associations with schools, music colleges and local authorities.
- She is credited with broadening the appeal of classical music to young and new audiences through her extensive education work and appearances at events such as the Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony and iTunes Festival.
- Nicola was awarded the Queen's Medal for Music in 2017, the youngest ever recipient, and was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the 2019 New Year Honours, in recognition of her services to music.
- Nicola Benedetti is one of the most sought-after violinists of her generation. Her ability to captivate audiences with her innate musicianship and dynamic presence, coupled with her wide appeal as a high-profile advocate for classical music, has made her one of the most influential classical artists of today.
- She is in much demand with major orchestras and conductors across the globe and this continues across the 2019-20 season with concerts throughout the UK, Europe and America.