

# YOLA

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Empowering Youth,  
Building Community



LA Phil

GUSTAVO DUDAMEL  
MUSIC & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR





“To share music with children — who might not otherwise have access to it — is to share beauty, to share a different way of being. It can change their definition of what is possible for themselves.”





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## In the fall of 2007, the LA Phil and its community partners launched Youth Orchestra Los Angeles, a music program for 80 students in South LA.

Now known simply as YOLA, the program currently serves more than 1,200 young musicians across four sites, providing them with free instruments, intensive music instruction (up to 18 hours per week), academic support, and leadership training.

YOLA began as an adaptation of Venezuela's revolutionary El Sistema music education program, but it is now an innovative model in its own right, guiding students and teachers from nearly 100 music programs around the country.

The pages that follow describe YOLA's expansive offerings today and give a glimpse at where the program is headed in the years ahead.

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**Gustavo Dudamel**  
Music & Artistic Director, Walt and Lilly Disney Chair  
Los Angeles Philharmonic

# YOLA Sites and Partners

YOLA currently comprises four sites across Los Angeles. Though all are guided by a unified philosophy and mission, each site is designed differently to serve the specific needs of its community.

YOLA's every success — from its local impact to its national influence — is built on a foundation of partnership. Through YOLA, community partners, peer program partners, and philanthropic partners come together to serve a common goal: putting the transformative power of music-making into the hands of young people who would not otherwise have access to it.

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## YOLA at EXPO Center

The YOLA at EXPO Center program, within Exposition Park in South L.A., has grown to include three orchestras, mentorship, group lessons, chamber music, and parent programs.

YOLA at EXPO Center is a partnership of the LA Phil, Harmony Project, and the EXPO Center, a City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks facility.

<b>Location:</b> South L.A.	<b>Students:</b> 320
<b>Established:</b> 2007	<b>Hours Per Week:</b> 12-18
<b>Ages:</b> 6-18	<b>No. of Orchestras:</b> 3

## YOLA at Torres

Nestled on the campus of Esteban E. Torres High School, a performing arts magnet school in East L.A., YOLA at Torres offers students the opportunity to thrive in an intensive, nurturing musical environment, receiving up to 15 hours of musical instruction and academic tutoring per week.

YOLA at Torres receives logistics and infrastructure support from the East L.A. Performing Arts Magnet and Beyond the Bell.

<b>Location:</b> East L.A.	<b>Students:</b> 180
<b>Established:</b> 2014	<b>Hours Per Week:</b> 12-15
<b>Ages:</b> 8-17	<b>No. of Orchestras:</b> 2

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## YOLA at HOLA

YOLA at HOLA (Heart of Los Angeles) classes include music creativity, singing and solfège, ensemble rehearsals, and an hour of academic tutoring daily. This holistic approach fosters a sense of community and provides the students with the opportunity to take advantage of HOLA's exceptional programs and resources.

YOLA at HOLA is a partnership between the LA Phil and Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA).

<b>Location:</b> Rampart District	<b>Students:</b> 250
<b>Established:</b> 2010	<b>Hours Per Week:</b> 15
<b>Age:</b> 8-18	<b>No. of Orchestras:</b> 2

## YOLA at Camino Nuevo

YOLA at Camino Nuevo is the first in-school YOLA model, allowing the LA Phil to bring rigorous music education into the school day and extend it after school. Currently serving students in grades K-5, the program will grow to serve students through 12th grade at the Kayne Siart and Miramar campuses of Camino Nuevo Charter Academy.

<b>Location:</b> Westlake/ MacArthur Park	<b>Students:</b> 500
<b>Established:</b> 2017	<b>Hours Per Week:</b> 10
<b>Ages:</b> 5-9	

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## COMING SOON! YOLA at Inglewood

On August 15, 2018, the LA Phil unveiled the architectural design by Gehry Partners, LLC, for its new Judith and Thomas L. Beckmen YOLA Center at Inglewood: YOLA's first permanent, purpose-built facility.

Learn more about the new center on page 12.





“Music gave me a life I never imagined I would have,  
and it made me realize that where I came from had  
nothing to do with where I can go.”

Marcela, YOLA, Class of 2014





“I will continue to use my musical experience until there is a positive change in the community. Just like YOLA reached out to me, I will reach out to others who are facing the same educational challenges I once faced.”

Ingrid, YOLA, Class of 2019



# YOLA Institute and Beyond



Since its first class of seniors graduated in the spring of 2015, the number of YOLA alumni who have pursued higher education (both at colleges and conservatories) has increased exponentially. YOLA's growing corps of alumni have remained close with the program — returning as mentors for younger students, performing alongside their peers in chamber groups, and helping to guide the program's development.

Their experiences have helped inform the creation of the YOLA Institute — a suite of opportunities designed to help students who choose to continue their musical study beyond graduation.

## YOLA Institute

Our students face obstacles in applying to and attending colleges and conservatories that their more economically privileged peers do not. The YOLA Institute helps level the playing field by providing them with the resources necessary to be competitive applicants to university music programs and conservatories. These resources include:

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Private lessons with LA Phil musicians and teaching artists

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College application support, including subsidized audition travel and recordings

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Additional training opportunities through chamber music ensembles and a high-level “super” orchestra made up of students from all of YOLA's sites

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Performance and travel opportunities, including regional, national, and international tours

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# YOLA Opportunities



**“The YOLA tour was my first time going to Europe or anywhere really. We met our peers from London, and we saw how universal music is. It belongs to everyone. It is who we are.”**

**Liliana, YOLA, Class of 2019**

YOLA's young musicians have performed in great concert halls all over the world and hundreds of venues throughout Southern California; on national and international television broadcasts; and alongside the greatest artists from numerous genres.

Beginning in 2013, YOLA musicians have accompanied the LA Phil on every one of its orchestra tours, traveling to cities in Europe, the East Coast, and Asia. In the fall of 2016, a full YOLA Orchestra of 80 students embarked on a five-city tour of California.

Whether they are sharing the Super Bowl halftime show stage with Chris Martin (Coldplay), Beyoncé, and Bruno Mars, or performing side-by-side with the LA Phil, YOLA's musicians rise to any occasion.



# YOLA National



**“I tried out because it changed my life doing so last year. It made me realize that I can go places with music. I didn’t hesitate on auditioning, I did it excitedly in hopes of meeting new people and seeing a different place.”**

## **Student musician**

YOLA National Symphony Orchestra

YOLA National programs bring together people who believe that music education has a powerful role to play in youth and community development. Designed to respond to the changing needs of the field, YOLA National offers an ever-growing number of opportunities for young musicians, teaching artists, program administrators, and other stakeholders to learn from and create community with one another.

Through this work, the LA Phil aims to empower young people from populations that have been historically excluded from intensive music training and foster a dialog among practitioners that will help shape the future of the field.

## **YOLA National Festival**

An intensive orchestral training program, the YOLA National Festival is open to students aged 12–18 from Sistema-inspired programs and similar initiatives from across the country that are invested in youth and community development through music education.

Musicians convene each summer in Southern California for a two-week period of learning and performance with world-renowned conductors and artist mentors. Participation is free — travel, lodging, meals, and programming are provided to students at no cost. The program currently features two ensembles: the YOLA National Symphony Orchestra and the YOLA National Chamber Orchestra.

The Festival’s ultimate aim is to create a civically minded community of young musicians from diverse regions across the country, while developing a model for excellence that will shape progressive music education nationwide.

## **YOLA National Symposium**

The YOLA National Symposium brings together educators, administrators, advocates, and other key stakeholders in both Sistema-inspired programs and programs similarly invested in youth and community development through music education.

Over the course of the symposium, participants from around the world share best practices, network with their peers, and explore the challenges and opportunities of empowering young people and communities through music.





“Everybody in the United States comes from a different background. And even though we have differences, we still come together and are united as a family through music.”

**Student musician**  
YOLA National Symphony Orchestra





“There has been a long suspicion that music practice has a beneficial effect on human behavior. But this study proves convincingly that the effect is real.”

**António Damásio**, David Dornsife Professor of Neuroscience  
Director, Brain and Creativity Institute University of Southern California



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# YOLA Research

**“Together these results demonstrate that community music programs can offset some of the negative consequences that low socio-economic status can have on child development.”**

## **Assal Habibi**

Assistant Professor (Research)  
of Psychology  
Investigator, Brain and Music Program  
University of Southern California

## **Is YOLA working?**

There is a decade’s worth of anecdotal evidence that attests to its transformative power, but empirically measuring the program’s effect on the social, emotional, and cognitive development of young musicians is another matter.

Partnering with leading research institutions, the USC Brain and Creativity Institute and Stanford University’s SPARQ (Social Psychological Answers to Real-world Questions) program, the LA Phil is working to provide compelling evidence for the benefits of musical training.

Because many YOLA musicians begin the program in elementary school and continue through high school graduation, it is a perfect laboratory for the type of longitudinal studies that have the power to gain widespread traction in the minds of the public and help shift the policies affecting what children learn in school.

## **USC Brain and Creativity Institute**

The LA Phil first partnered with the USC Brain and Creativity Institute in 2012 to investigate the effects of musical training on brain aspects of cognitive and social development in children. The results showed accelerated brain maturation in music students from the YOLA at HOLA site. Given these promising results, the LA Phil and BCI embarked on a second study in 2018 — this time aiming to investigate the effects of musical training on development and well-being of a large group of children made at risk by their socioeconomic status. The study will follow two cohorts of children from the YOLA at Camino Nuevo site over a five-year period. It will use neuroimaging and behavioral probes to examine the impact of the program on their cognitive and social development, on academic achievements, and on the development of emotional regulation abilities.

## **USC Dornsife**

Dana and David Dornsife  
College of Letters, Arts and Sciences  
*Brain and Creativity Institute*

## **Stanford SPARQ**

### **(Social Psychological Answers to Real-world Questions)**

Increasing “failure mindset” may not sound like a good idea — but it is, according to the Stanford team investigating YOLA’s psychological impact. What is failure mindset? It’s the belief that making mistakes — and working through them — is how one eventually succeeds. Psychologists say this helps kids understand that hard work pays off, which contributes to better grades, career progress, and healthy social lives.

The logo for Stanford SPARQ, featuring the text "Stanford SPARQ" in white, bold, sans-serif font on a dark red rectangular background.

**Stanford  
SPARQ**



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# Judith and Thomas L. Beckmen YOLA Center



The Judith and Thomas L. Beckmen YOLA Center at Inglewood is the next step in YOLA's evolution. The realization of Gustavo Dudamel's highest aspirations for the program, the Center will deepen YOLA's impact locally and expand its influence nationally.

**Opening in the fall of 2020, the 25,000-square-foot, Frank Gehry-designed Center will serve as:**

## **New YOLA Site**

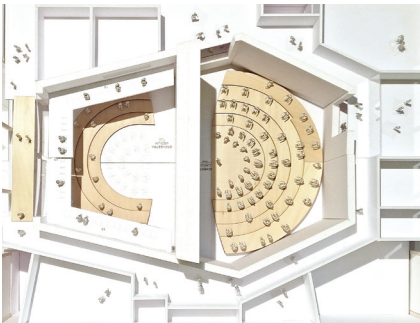
Welcoming 500 students annually with daily after-school sessions and weekend rehearsals.

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## **Home of the YOLA Institute**

A home and a haven for young musicians and a gathering place for a growing community. Providing leadership development and pre-professional training opportunities for students from all YOLA sites.

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**"We are excited to welcome the LA Phil family as the newest member of our extraordinary community. We look forward to the involvement of Inglewood youth with YOLA."**

**Mayor James T. Butts**  
City of Inglewood

## **Rehearsal and Performance Space**

Bringing together YOLA musicians from every neighborhood site and hosting free, monthly performances featuring YOLA, LA Phil, and community-based musicians.

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## **Hub for YOLA National Programs**

A gathering place for the nation's music educators and advocates. Hosting the YOLA National Festival and Symposium, which bring together music educators, students, and advocates from Sistema-inspired programs around the world.

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“I designed the Center to be a world-class instrument for the community, and I can’t wait to see how they use it.”

Frank Gehry, Architect





“Donors believe in what we do, and they are part of this institution. We are a family, and without them, we cannot do anything.”

**Gustavo Dudamel**

Music & Artistic Director, Walt and Lilly Disney Chair  
Los Angeles Philharmonic



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## YOLA Donors



**“YOLA addresses the important issues of equity and inclusion, and provides access to youth who might not otherwise have access to the benefits of music and the arts.”**

**The Honorable Hilda L. Solis**  
Los Angeles County Supervisor,  
First District

There would be no YOLA without the loyal donors, partners, and friends who have championed the program from its outset and fostered 10 years of remarkable success.

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**To learn more about YOLA, visit [laphil.com/yola](http://laphil.com/yola)**



United Airlines is the official airline of the LA Phil’s Education Initiatives.

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## YOLA Partners

**More than the sum of its parts, YOLA thrives because of the following partnerships:**



**Camino  
Nuevo  
Charter  
Academy**



**PARKPROUDLA**



**EXPO CENTER**



**TORRES**  
EAST LA  
PERFORMING ARTS MAGNET

