

The European Youth Orchestra to Leave UK for a Fresh Start in Italy

S. K. (October 18, 2017)



Britain's decision in 2016 to leave the European Union shook the foundations of the bloc, particularly within the arts world. The prestigious European Youth Orchestra (ages 16 to 26), headquartered for decades in London, relies heavily on EU funding to survive. However, once Britain leaves the Union, this funding will not remain available to the orchestra if it is based in the UK. In the face of extinction, the EUYO must turn to fresh solutions in order to survive.

After 40 years of serenading audiences from its London headquarters, The European Youth Orchestra will find a post-Brexit home in Italy, Italian Culture Minister Dario Franceschini announced last week.

The [EUYO](#) [2] was established in London in 1976, and has since brought together young musicians from all over the European Union in the name of exceptional musical performance. However, the orchestra's future was threatened in 2016, due to disclosed cuts in funding from the EU, as well as political turmoil regarding the UK.



In May of that year, the EUYO announced it would [cease operations](#) [3] within the next four months. The news fostered backlash throughout the EU, and the need for a new plan of action was emphasized by the UK's 'Brexit' decision to leave the Union.

"It makes absolutely no sense for the office not to be in the EU," Marshall Marcus, the orchestra's CEO since 2013, told The Guardian. "You can't ask for EU funding and then not be in the EU."

As a result of negotiations, the EUYO will now be legally headquartered at RAI broadcasting offices in Rome. RAI is the only European State broadcaster to support the EUYO as its first official broadcasting partner. The EUYO will operate out of Ferrara's Abbado Theatre, named after the orchestra's founder, [Claudio Abbado](#) [4].

Abbado, a native of Milan, is considered one of the most illustrious conductors of the 20th century. He has served high-ranking positions at international opera houses such as [La Scala](#) [5], the London Symphony Orchestra, the Vienna State Opera and the Berlin Philharmonic. Abbado also acted as a principal guest conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Now, nearly three years after Abbado's death, it seems fitting that the EUYO will take residence in the homeland of its founder. Today, the orchestra is directed by Vassily Petrenko and holds true to its mission with 160 musicians hailing from each of the EU's 28 member states. Though UK musicians are currently still eligible to play for the EUYO, it is unlikely they will be accepted to the program in the future.

European Parliament Culture Committee member Silvia Costa, who proposed the bid to transfer the orchestra's headquarters, believes the move signals "a strong and coherent message on the value and the role that culture, music and young artists represent in Europe."

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Links

[1] <http://iitaly.org/files/euyonetherlandsjpg>

[2] <http://www.euyo.eu/>

[3] <https://www.cmuse.org/european-union-youth-orchestra-to-cease-operations-after-funding-cut/>

[4] <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2014/jan/20/claudio-abbado>

[5] <http://www.teatroallascala.org/en/la-scala/la-scala.html>