

PENDO MASOTE (19)

Pendo was born into an active musical home in Johannesburg, where he showed an interest in the violin as an infant. He had his first lessons with Elizabeth Rennie at the age of five. In 2014 he became a pupil of Irina Tsoniff.

He became the youngest member of the South African National Youth Orchestra at the age of 12 and was chosen to take part in the South African National Youth Orchestra/Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra master classes conducted by members of the Concertgebouw in Johannesburg. In 2016 he was awarded the first prize in the primary schools category of the 2016 Grahamstown National Music Competition as well as the prize for the Best Overall String player at the competition. Pendo has also performed as soloist with the Johannesburg Symphony Orchestra, the Cape Philharmonic Orchestra and the Johannesburg Festival Orchestra. In 2019 he was a finalist in the National Youth Music Competition in Cape Town.

In 2017 he was featured at the National Arts Festival, Makanda, to critical acclaim. Since 2017 he has been a pupil of Akiko Ono at the Yehudi Menuhin School, Britain's flagship specialist music school, where he recently completed and received his A levels in Music, English and History.

In August 2022 he participated in the Chineke! Junior Orchestra's European tour. He was recently featured as a soloist in RMB Starlight Classics - South Africa's premier art music event dubbed 'an Afro-symphonic experience'. He is currently a first-year student at the Royal College of Music in London, under the tutelage of Yuri Zshlin.

Outside of music, Pendo is a brown belt judoka and sadly had to discontinue judo when he left for the U.K. Since 2017 he has participated in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, and has obtained his Bronze and Silver awards.