

MUSIC WRITING COMPETITION NATIONAL WINNERS 2009

*Congratulations to all the young composers!
The first place winners of each category are featured below.*

Preparatory: Class 1
First Place: Thurian Sheppard (BC)
Second Place: Clara Moir (NS)

Preparatory: Class 2
Honourable Mention: Raphael Roth (BC)

Category A: Class 1
First Place: Anita Pari (ON)
Second Place: Carmyn Slater (BC)

Category A: Class 2
First Place: Mikaela S. Murtonen (ON)
Second Place: Sheryl Samuel (NS)

Category B: Class 1
First Place: Thomas Nicolson (NB)
Second Place: Laura R. Howells (NF)

Category B: Class 2
First Place: Chelsea Rothman (ON)

Category C
First Place: Amy Silver (ON)
Second Place: Brandon O'Leary (NS)

Category D
First Place: Graham Roebuck (BC)
Second Place: Rachel Fowlie-Neufeld (SK)

Category E
Honourable mention: Noy Goldenberg (ON)

Winner of the Helen Dahlstom award: *Search for the Rukh* by Graham Roebuck

PREPARATORY CLASS 1



First Place Winner: Thurian Sheppard - British Columbia

Thurian Sheppard, an eight-year old resident of Victoria, British Columbia, began piano lessons less than one year ago, with a remarkable teacher, Pamela Smirl of PJ Music Studios. He showed early promise and interest in composing and was thrilled when Pamela asked if he would like to submit a composition for the GVP&E. He composed "Astronomy", a piece he was quite pleased with, which won his age category in the festival and earned him the distinction of playing in the GVP&E Honours Concert. Thurian's composition went on to win the Preparatory 1 category of the BCRMTA Provincial Composition Competition and the 2009 Canada Music Week National Composition Competition sponsored by the CFMTA. Thurian is an extremely bright, focused and happy child who, in addition to composing, is an award winning horseback rider, has won trophies for the highest points accumulated in the Accelerated Reader Program, and excels at math and science. Thurian also loves nature, and spends countless hours climbing trees, visiting frogs, and exploring the woods. When asked why he enjoys composing, Thurian says "it's like two things; you get to play it, but it's your own, so you get to have both." After his success with "Astronomy", it will be interesting to see where his composing will take him and what music he will next bring into the world from the far reaches.

CLASS A1



First Place Winner: Anita Pari - Ontario

Imagine Anita at her laptop computer, transferring the melodies she hears in her head to a Finale document, and you will have a picture of the young composer at work. The process of creating new music comes most naturally to her; the motivation, often from a class assignment or a call for compositions. Anita began writing "Sonatina in C Major" to explore sonata form in the Keyboard Harmony and Composition class of Colin Mack. Among Anita's other notable compositions are "My First Waltz" (second place, Canada Music Week Music Writing Competition, 2008) and "Worlds Apart", a SATB choral work premiered last year by the Harmonia choir of Ottawa, and written in honour of Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan. Anita began studying piano at the age of three in the Music for Young Children program with Heather Giggey. She continued her piano studies with Heather Norian before becoming a student of Andrew Tunis of the University of Ottawa two years ago. She is currently preparing her ARCT diploma. At the age of seven, she began learning cello with Don Whitton. She is now a student of Anne Contant of the Conservatoire de musique de Gatineau. Anita is the recipient of several significant performance awards, including two silver medals of the Royal Conservatory of Music; first and second places in piano and cello, respectively, in the 10-year-old age group of the 2009 Canadian Music Competition; and first place in the provincial instrumental category of the 2009 ORMTA provincial Competition.

CLASS A2



First Place Winner: Mikaela Murtonen - Ontario

Mikaela was born June 8, 1997, the youngest in a musical family. When she learned to talk she also started to sing constantly... even in her sleep! As soon as she discovered that she could make music on the piano and with some lessons to guide her, she began to compose. She composed her first piece when she was seven. Her piano teacher Susanne Anderson encouraged her to enter the song writing contest. "My Shoes" was the first song she ever entered into a composition contest so you can imagine how she felt to win first place. She got the news on the week of her birthday - what a great birthday present! Mikaela feels truly blessed to have her song recognized this way. Mikaela has found an emotional outlet in creating music and it helps her express the way she feels. She has been busily writing more songs since "My Shoes" and may enter another competition in the future.

CLASS B1



First Place Winner: Thomas Nicolson - New Brunswick

Thomas Nicolson will enter grade 9 at Oromocto High School in Sept 2009. Unlike many of his fellow musicians, Thomas has only studied piano since March 2007, when the middle school music teacher recognized that he could pick out melodies on the piano by ear. After a couple of lessons, it was obvious that Thomas loved composing. Through the support of family and friends, he has been able to spend a lot of time practicing and writing music. Thomas is very grateful to have been able to take lessons from Acadian pianist, Julien Le Blanc, and several other teachers in Fredericton to work on piano performance (Louise Milner, Gérald Goguen and Anne MarieMurphy). Thomas will begin lessons with Dr. Stephen Runge, Mount Allison University, in the fall of 2009. Looking into the future, Thomas hopes to write his ARCT before he finishes high school and possibly attend the University of Toronto or McGill University where he would like to study composition and performance. Thomas would also enjoy becoming a music teacher to share the wonder that music has brought to him and people around the world.

CLASS B2



First Place Winner: Chelsea Rothman - Ontario

Chelsea enjoys writing songs of many genres, ranging from instrumental works to jazz-inspired pieces and pop tunes. She currently studies composition under Katya Pine. Chelsea finds inspiration for her writing from various rock and video game songs, namely from composer Koji Kondo and songwriter and vocalist of the band L'Arc~en~Ciel, Hyde. She primarily uses Logic Express and Logic Pro to compose music, occasionally using ProTools as a mixing tool in her teacher's studio. She began seriously composing at the age of 10 and has since moved from her simple Piano solo pieces to fully-arranged songs that are all conceived in Logic. Chelsea is currently learning the Bass Guitar. She plays the trumpet in the Westmount Wind Ensemble and sings in the school choir. She also studies voice with instructor Judith Lebane-Kane. She aspires to create a rock band in order to perform her original compositions live. "Chelsea's Boogie," won the 2006 ORMTA competition in the B1 class. "Escape" marks her second win for ORMTA, and her first win for CFMTA Nationals.

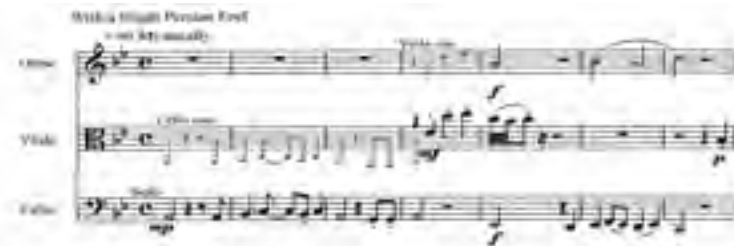
CLASS C



First Place Winner: Amy Silver - Ontario

Amy Silver is a multi-talented 15 year-old fan of Monty Python, particularly the Knights who say “Ni.” She is currently completing her Grade 9 RCM with piano teacher Robin Leszner. She studies composition with Katya Pine and plays drums and tenor sax in a couple of bands. She also plays accordion... upside down. In addition, Amy is a gifted writer, visual artist and comedic actor. She has played numerous character roles, including the Genie in Aladdin and the barber in Man of La Mancha. Amy hopes to use her range of talents, writing, set designing, composing and directing for films and musicals. She visualizes her compositions as part of future film scores and this composition is for a movie she plans to create in 2031.

CLASS D



First Place Winner and recipient of the Helen Dahlstrom Award:
Graham Roebuck - British Columbia

Graham has been playing piano and composing since he was 5 years old. At the same age, he began singing and acting with Four Seasons Musical Theatre. Since then he has been an avid performer on piano, trombone, mandolin, native american flute, and as a vocalist in solo and choral settings. He has also appeared in over 30 theatrical productions, the majority of which were musicals, in both lead and supporting roles. His latest passion is playwriting, and his one-act play appeared in the University of Victoria's Festival for New and Innovative Drama last March. He studies theatre and writing at Uvic, and piano and music theory with Pamela Smirl. One of his long-standing goals is to write his own full-length musical. Graham owes many thanks to Pamela Smirl of PJ music studios, who has instructed him for as long as he can remember, and to Arne Sahlen for his humorous and informative workshops. Graham would also like to thank the Victoria Symphony Orchestra, and specifically Karen Manders and Rodney Sharman. Search for the Rukh would not have existed without the VSO's vsNEW workshop and the support of those involved. He is grateful for festivals and opportunities that have kept him composing and in which he has won a number of awards: the Greater Victoria Performing Arts Festival, The Jean Coulthard Composing competition, BCRMTA, and Canada Music Week.