



2014 Young Artist Competition

Luke Payne captured the first place instrumental award with his performance of the Haydn C Major cello concerto at this year's Young Artist Competition, a natural follow-up to his last year's second-place finish. Soprano Zoe Woodaman's Puccini aria won her first place among the vocalists. The Competition, sponsored by the Fredericksburg Festival for the Performing Arts, is held annually for classically-trained students of instrument and voice. The Competition's second place winner was 14-year-old oboist Brendan Shirk. Andrew Liang, who won the 2012 Competition on the piano, was awarded the third-place prize with his performance of the popular DeBeriot violin concerto.

Twenty-two students entered the Competition in December, and auditions were held on January 9th at Chancellor Baptist Church in Spotsylvania. A team of four judges selected ten performers for the January 18th Finals Concert. First-place winners received \$500 scholarship awards while second- and third-place winners received scholarships of \$300 and \$200, respectively. In addition to the winners, Finalists included Andrea Kuliasha, piano; Kelsey Payne, violin; Bryce Baxter, tenor; Riana Chan, piano; Conner Skelly, violin; and Karen Me, piano.

Kirk Wilke, conductor of the Rappahannock POPS, served as lead judge for this year's Competition. All judges volunteer their time to the Competition and are highly regarded musicians in the area. Other judges were Mandy Carr, vocal, Chris Abeel, strings, and McKenneth King, piano. Contestants were judged on their musicianship, technical ability, and presentation displayed in their audition and final concert performances.

Contestants must be age 18 and younger and come from Fredericksburg and the surrounding counties of Stafford, Spotsylvania, King George, Caroline, Culpeper, Orange, and Westmoreland.

Cornelia Bryant, a board member and long-time supporter of the FFPA, has graciously underwritten the Competition for ten consecutive years. Chancellor Baptist Church and music director McKenneth King have hosted the Competition since its first year in 2004.

The Fredericksburg Festival for the Performing Arts, in partnership with the Rappahannock POPS Orchestra, encourages the development of young musicians in Fredericksburg and the surrounding counties. Each year the Competition's first place winners are invited to solo with the Rappahannock POPS Orchestra. Winners of the 2013 Young Artists Competition, pianist Amy Wood and soprano Megan Walton, will be performing with the POPS Orchestra on Saturday, March 1, at 7:30 PM at Grace Church. Additionally, all four of this year's winners were invited to perform at the three FFPA Chamber Festival concerts that will be held in May this year.

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