

Young composers win Hey, Mozart! competition

By S. Derrickson Moore
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LAS CRUCES — Two talented local kids will have the chance to star with two symphony orchestras before they hit their teens.

Quintin Dean, 12, and Philip Miller, 11, both of Las Cruces, are among 16 young composers whose original melodies were named winners in the prestigious 2007 Hey, Mozart! New Mexico competition. The composers will be recognized at an awards ceremony and free public concert Sept. 7 at the Roy E. Disney Center for Performing Arts at the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque. Each child will perform his or her melody and the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra will play an orchestrated version. A CD featuring orchestral arrangements of the melodies will be available at a reception after the concert. The Las Cruces Symphony Orchestra will also feature area winners in a local concert next year.

The announcement came on a very good day for Philip, son of Lisa and Donald Miller of Las Cruces.



Quintin Dean and Philip Miller

"I felt really happy. I won my first baseball game that day, also," said Philip, a fifth grader at Hill-rise Elementary School.

He entered a melody called "Halloween."

His composition, he said, is "kind of scary," kind of like performing with two symphonies.

"I'm a little nervous about playing in front of hundreds of people," Philip said.

His fellow local honoree is looking forward to his star turn.

"I think it's like a once-in-a-lifetime kind of deal. I'm really excited. I really thought I wouldn't win," said Quintin, son of Dama and Terry Dean of Las Cruces.

"Breeze Through The Willow" was the winning entry for the Zia

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Mozart

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Middle School sixth grader, who plays piano and viola and is part of Zia's orchestra.

"I'm a country music kind of guy, but I also like classical," said Quintin, who revealed that he thinks music will always be an important part of his life.

"I don't know if it will be my career, but I hope that in my free time, I will always keep with it," Quintin said.

Philip thinks he will "probably go into engineering."

He said his piano teacher, Sylvie Peale, encouraged him to enter the Hey, Mozart! contest.

New Mexico preteens submitted 106 original melodies for the state-wide competition, now in its second year.

"This year the quality of the submissions was so high that an honorable mention category was created," said David Felberg, New Mexico music director for the Hey, Mozart! program.

And Las Cruces kids made a great showing in the new category, said contest president Brookes McIntyre, with honorable mentions going to Amalia Zeitlin, 11; Andrew Scott McLaughlin, 10; Tiffani Montoya, 9; Susana Navarro, 10; and Jazmine Quintela, 7.

"In all, five of the 11 honorable mentions are from Las Cruces, so there is plenty of talent there. We were so thrilled that submissions from Las Cruces went from six last year to 40 this year," McIntyre said.

She lauded the efforts of regional educators in nurturing young composers.

"Laurie Norman, Luella Dick and Ruth Chambliss are teachers who have encouraged kids to enter. Ruth is at MacArthur Elementary and worked with kids with no music background, on xylophones. Two of her students, Tiffani Montoya and Susana Navarro, are among the honorable mentions," McIntyre said, adding that the achievement was especially impressive because the children competed against other entrants with considerable musical education.

Hey, Mozart! contest winners ▶▶

Who: Quintin Dean, 12, and Philip Miller, 11, both of Las Cruces

Other 2007 state winners: Jocelyn Boyack, 6; Stephanie Brenner, 11; Dylan Cuellar, 10; Angela Jerkins, 11; Simon Laird, 11; Maia Scarpetta, 12; Tankred Steinbach, 9; and Maya Vansuch, 11, all of Albuquerque; Benjamin Harris, 13, Bosque Farms; Christopher Musson, 12, Rio Rancho; John Paul Norman, 11, Corrales; Ian Kingsolver, 9, Placitas; Sierra Stackhouse, 13, Aztec; and Sophia Wickert, 11, Las Vegas.

Star perks: Winning compositions featured on CD, composers perform and have works performed by New Mexico Symphony Orchestra Sept. 7 in Albuquerque and local composers will have their work performed by Las Cruces Symphony April 19, 2008 in Las Cruces

Info: www.hey Mozartnm.org

On the Web ▶▶

Hear melodies by 2006 winners, including three Las Cruces kids, Jamie Des Enfants, Cambria Huff and Christopher Trujillo, at www.hey Mozartnm.org

Last year's Hey, Mozart! winners were a hit at this month's Las Cruces Symphony Orchestra family concert, said Kathleen Albers, the symphony's education outreach director.

"People just loved it and were so charmed," Albers said, when Las Cruces' 2006 winners, pianist Jamie Des Enfants, flutist Cambria Huff and vocalist Christopher Trujillo, played and sang their original compositions, followed by a performance of their works by LCSO musicians.

Young Quintin and Philip will get similar star treatment at the 2008 LCSO "Pops 4 Kids" concert April 19, 2008, at the New Mexico State University Music Center Recital Hall.

The CD featuring last year's winners got national exposure on NPR's "Performance Today."

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