

# Concerto Competition



## Saskatoon Pianist wins 2011 SMFA Concerto Competition

The Saskatchewan Music Festival Association (SMFA), Joy McFarlane-Burton, President, is pleased to announce that the 29<sup>th</sup> SMFA Concerto Competition was won by Samuel Deason, a pianist originally from Saskatoon, who played an award-winning performance of Piano Concerto in D flat Major, Op. 38 by Aram Khachaturian. He was accompanied by Bonnie Nicholson. Samuel received the first prize of \$2,000 and the opportunity to be a featured soloist in an upcoming season with the Regina and Saskatoon Symphony Orchestras.

Samuel has distinguished himself as a versatile and fearless musician, having made his concert debut in Toronto performing Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 2 with maestro Peter Oundjian in Koerner Hall's inaugural season. Recent prizewinner in the Aram Khachaturian International Piano Competition, Samuel took first prize in the Saskatchewan Registered Music Teachers' Association's Lyell Gustin, Gordon Wallis, and Florence Bowes competitions. He has furthermore garnished awards in the TSO National Piano Competition, Shean Piano Competition, Wideman Piano Competition, and the Minnesota Orchestra's WAMSO Concerto Competition where he received the distinction of "best pianist".

Samuel is an enthusiastic participant of summer music festivals in Banff, Orford, and Toronto, having sought the wisdom of Robert McDonald, Julian Martin, John Perry, John O'Connor, André Laplante, James Anagnoson, Ursula Oppens, and Anton Kuerti in masterclass. Born in Saskatoon in 1988, his early teachers include Kathleen Solose, Bonnie Nicholson and Kent McWilliams. Studies at the Glenn Gould School followed with Leon Fleisher and Marc Durand. He resides in Bloomington, learning under the likes of the legendary Menahem Pressler. He holds the position of Associate Instructor of piano at Indiana University.

Eleven young musicians competed on Saturday, November 19, 2011 in Convocation Hall, University of Saskatchewan. Meagan Milatz (pianist) of Weyburn and Alyssa Ramsay (cellist) of Regina both accompanied by Cherith Alexander placed 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> respectively. The competition was judged by Raymond Ko, Toronto, ON, Stephen Runge, Sackville, NB and Maxim Antoshin, Regina Symphony Orchestra.

The next SMFA Concerto Competition will be held February of 2013 in Regina. The SMFA, established in 1908 to promote music in the province of Saskatchewan through competitive music festivals, receives funding through the Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture & Recreation, SaskCulture and the Saskatchewan Arts Board.



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