



For immediate release  
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## MEDIA RELEASE

**In the electrifying countdown to Saturday's Grand Final of the 2013 ABC Symphony Australia Young Performers Awards at the Melbourne Town Hall, three exceptionally talented Grand Finalists were announced last night, after winning the Chamber Music round of the Finals.**

**ABC and Symphony Australia are proud to announce the three Grand Finalists: Stefan Cassomenos, 28 (VIC – Piano), Andrew Kawai, 15 (VIC – Oboe) and Hoang Pham, 28 (VIC – Piano), who will each perform a concerto with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Maestro Christopher Seaman.**

The **2013 ABC Symphony Australia Young Performer of the Year** wins a cash prize of \$25,000, the ABC Sir Charles Moses Young Performer's Trophy, a professional CD recording, a paid performance with the MSO and other professional development opportunities.

"We have witnessed such brilliant talent performing in the ABC Symphony Australia Young Performers Awards this year. Now we have only three Finalists remaining from over 200 who applied and auditioned," says Kate Libbetter, CEO of Symphony Australia.

"These Awards are among Australia's most prestigious classical music awards and enable the Finalists to demonstrate their musical prowess across different musical formats – recital, chamber and concerto – and show the audience and judges the depth and breadth of their skill and talent."

In the Concerto round, the Finalists have chosen to perform the following works: Stefan Cassomenos will play PROKOFIEV's Piano Concerto No. 3, Hoang Pham will TCHAIKOVSKY's Piano Concerto No.1 and Andrew Kawai will play STRAUSS' Oboe Concerto.

**Stefan Cassomenos** has performed internationally since he was 10. A finalist in the 2012 Rhodes International Piano Competition, he also won second prize as well as the best recital prize in the 2013 Lev Vlassenko Piano Competition. **Andrew Kawai** is a distinguished 15 year old with multiple awards and prizes, including 1<sup>st</sup> prize in the Junior section of 2010 Australasian Double Reed Competition and 2<sup>nd</sup> prize in the senior section in 2011 and 2013. Extremely talented in piano and cello as well, he has been only playing the oboe for four years!

**Hoang Pham** has appeared as a soloist with the Melbourne, Queensland and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras, won the Lev Vlassenko Piano Competition in 2005 and was awarded Best Australian Pianist at the Sydney International Piano Competition in 2008.

The Grand Final is open to the public, broadcast live on ABC Classic FM and will be filmed by ABC TV for future broadcast.

**2013 ABC Symphony Australia Young Performers Awards GRAND FINAL  
Saturday 12 October, 7pm Melbourne Town Hall**

Prokofiev Piano Concerto No.3 in C Op.26 (Stefan Cassomenos)

Strauss Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra (Andrew Kawai)

INTERVAL

Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No.1 Op.23 (Hoang Pham)

The orchestra will also perform Percy Grainger's Irish Tune from County Derry following the final concerto performance as a tribute to John Hopkins who recently passed away.

The GRAND FINAL will be broadcast live on ABC Classic FM.

Tickets are free and available at the door from 5:30pm.

**Prizes awarded at end of the competition:**

Young Performer of the Year	\$25,000
Concerto Finalist Prize x 2 (runners-up)	\$7,500
Best Recital	\$5000
Best Chamber Music	\$5000
People's Choice Prize	\$5000
Best Performance of an Australian Work	\$5000 (awarded for a performance in any of the Finals rounds)

**ABC Sir Charles Moses Trophy:** This perpetual trophy is presented to the ABC Symphony Australia Young Performer of the Year by the ABC in honour of Sir Charles Moses, Managing Director of the ABC, 1935-1965.

**For more information, please visit**

[www.symphonyminternational.net](http://www.symphonyminternational.net)

[www.abc.net.au/classic/events/ypa/](http://www.abc.net.au/classic/events/ypa/)

[www.mso.com.au](http://www.mso.com.au)

## **ABOUT the new ABC Symphony Australia Young Performers Awards**

Symphony Australia is proud to collaborate with the ABC in presenting the ABC Symphony Australia Young Performers Awards. Throughout its 69 year history, the competition has been renowned for its ability to identify and nurture talented young Australian musicians.

In 2013, a new format for the competition is being introduced. Key changes include the introduction of a chamber music round, the removal of instrument categories with a set number of finalists, and the presentation of all finals rounds in a festival format. These finals include recital programs, chamber music and concertos with orchestra, with numbers of contestants reducing as each round is performed.

On offer is a wide range of prizes, including new prizes for Best Recital, Best Chamber Music Performance, Best Performance of an Australian work and the People's Choice prize.

The Young Performer of the Year will receive an increased cash prize of \$25,000 as well as the chance to perform with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, a CD recording and media training and opportunities.

Recognising the variety of skills required by musicians in today's multitude of performance opportunities, we have carefully sought to broaden the requirements of the competition while still honouring the long history of the event.

Symphony Australia has also responded to audience demand to hear more from these fine young players, and to have the opportunity to cast their own vote on the outcomes.

The new format will allow concert-goers to attend seven public performances over the period of 10 days, and all public concerts will be broadcast on ABC Classic FM.

Presented as a mini-festival, audiences both in the concert hall and listening around the country will be able to learn more about their favourite finalists as the week progresses. Culminating in a concert with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, the last three performers will battle for the title of 2013 ABC Symphony Australia Young Performer of the Year.