



For immediate release  
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## MEDIA RELEASE

**The six talented Chamber Music Finalists for the 2013 ABC Symphony Australia Young Performers Awards have been just announced – two of whom are only 15 years old! They form the shortlist of brilliant young musicians who will perform with seasoned professionals from the MSO in the Chamber Music Round on Wednesday 9 October – in the thrilling countdown to the Grand Final on Saturday 12 October.**

A hotly contested Recital Round on Friday 4 and Saturday 5 October saw 12 of Australia's exceptional young performers each perform a 45 minute recital and battle it out for six places in the Chamber Music round of 2013 ABC Symphony Australia Young Performers Awards in Melbourne.

**ABC and Symphony Australia are proud to announce the six successful Finalists: Stefan Cassomenos, 28 (VIC – Piano), Grace Clifford, 15 (NSW – Violin), Andrew Kawai, 15 (VIC – Oboe), Hoang Pham, 28 (VIC – Piano), Jonathon Ramsay, 19 (NSW – Euphonium) and Harry Ward, 17 (NSW – Violin) – who will each perform in a concert on Wednesday 9 October (1pm and 7pm) at Melbourne's Iwaki Auditorium.**

**Three Finalists from Chamber Music round will be selected to compete in the Grand Final - the Concerto round - on Saturday 12 October with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Maestro Christopher Seaman at the Melbourne Town Hall.**

The Awards are in a brand new 'mini-festival' format this year, with more prizes than ever before. 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.

"Now in its 69<sup>th</sup> year, the 2013 ABC Symphony Australia Young Performers Awards is Australia's oldest musical award and its most prestigious," says Kate Lidbetter, CEO of Symphony Australia. "It's been wonderful to witness the recitals performed by extremely talented young classical musicians and it's not been an easy task for the judges."

In the Chamber Music round, the Finalists have chosen to perform the following works: Harry Ward and Grace Clifford will play the BRAHMS Piano Trio No. 3; Jonathon Ramsay will play the BRAHMS Horn Trio; Stefan Cassomenos and Hoang Pham will play MENDELSSOHN'S Piano Trio No. 1 and Andrew Kawai will play MOZART'S Oboe Quartet. Each of them will collaborate with musicians from the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra to present their chosen work.

**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. At only 15 years of age, **Grace Clifford** is a veteran of many awards including the Robert Pikler Scholarship. She was awarded 4<sup>th</sup> prize in the Junior section of the Yehudi Menuhin International Violin

Competition in Beijing in 2012. **Andrew Kawai** is another 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 the year later. 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. It's second time around in these Awards for euphonium player **Jonathon Ramsay**, who reached Stage III last year. He won the 2013 Ern Keller International Soloist of the Year competition. Another prolific award recipient is **Harry Ward** - the winner of the 2012 National Youth Concerto Competition and more. In 2011 and 2012, he received full scholarships to the Meadowbank School of Music in New York.

With the final stages including concerto, chamber music and solo recital components, the musician who claims the title of **ABC Symphony Australia Young Performer of the Year will be outstanding in all areas of musical performance**, demonstrating high technical proficiency, an understanding of the repertoire and an appreciation of musical style.

All concerts in each stage of the Finals are open to the public, broadcast live on ABC Classic FM and some concerts will be filmed by ABC TV for future broadcast.

## **2013 ABC Symphony Australia Young Performers Awards**

### **Concert 1: 1pm, Wednesday 9 October, Iwaki Auditorium**

Grace Clifford (violin) performing the Brahms Piano Trio No.3 in C minor Op.101

Andrew Kawai (oboe) performing the Mozart Oboe Quartet in F K.370

Stefan Cassomenos (piano) performing the Mendelssohn Piano Trio No.1 in D minor Op.49

### **Concert 2: 7pm, Wednesday 9 October, Iwaki Auditorium**

Harry Ward (violin) performing the Brahms Piano Trio No.3 in C minor Op.101

Hoang Pham (piano) performing the Mendelssohn Piano Trio No.1 in D minor Op.49

Jonathon Ramsay (euphonium) performing the Brahms Horn Trio Op.40

Both these concerts will be broadcast live on ABC Classic FM. Tickets are free and available at the door an hour prior to each concert.

### **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
Performance 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.symphonyinternational.net](http://www.symphonyinternational.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.