

# YCC winners set for opening night

**SHARON WEAVER**  
Contributing Writer

The judges of the Young Composer Challenge (YCC) announced this year's winners on Wednesday. The Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra will play the winning ensemble compositions and the winning full orchestra compositions in a free concert, on Sept. 28 at the Bob Carr.

In alphabetical order, the ensemble compositions winners are: "Natasha's Song" by Katherine Armstrong, 18; "L'Invocation et La Dance" by Stephen Cassells-Hamby, 17; and "Nocturne" by John Henderson, 17. The full orchestra compositions winners are: "Battle of Stalingrad" by Nathan Blair, 14; "Flight of the Fourth Caravel" by John Callahan, 16; and "Restless Night" by Ryan Dodge, 15.

Armstrong, who com-

## AND THE WINNERS ARE ...

### ENSEMBLE COMPOSITION WINNERS

#### "NATASHA'S SONG"

by Katharine Armstrong, 18

#### "L'INVOCATION ET LA DANCE"

by Stephen Cassells-Hamby, 17

#### "NOCTURNE"

by John Henderson, 17

posed "Natasha's Song," said the character of Natasha Rosstova of the novel "War and Peace" by Leo Tolstoy, inspired her. "My original score portrays what Natasha embodied: love and life," Armstrong said.

Cassells-Hamby said that when he heard he was one of the winners he was "static, stunned and amazed; as if I won the lottery." He said he

### FULL ORCHESTRA COMPOSITIONS

#### "BATTLE OF STALINGRAD"

by Nathan Blair, 14

#### "FLIGHT OF THE FOURTH CARAVEL"

by John Callahan, 16

#### "RESTLESS NIGHT"

by Ryan Dodge, 15

admires the music of composer Bittersdorf, and wanted to give it a shot. He started with a chelo sonata, and then added violin, then a viola and so on.

"Music is fascinating," Hamby said. "[It] is a universal language that everyone understands."

The youngest of the six composers, Blair, has been playing since he was 5 years

old, with the help of his mom.

"My goal is to be a symphony conductor," Blair said. "Then I can live in music and music can live in me."

Blair defined composing music as a job. "That's what I do when I come home from school: I write for an hour," he said.

Callahan, from Marianna, Fla., said "I've been waiting for this for a long time." Callahan worked on his piece for 5 months. "It was hard sometimes, but I pulled through, and it came out pretty good," he said.

Dodge said he is excited to hear his first full orchestra piece at the concert. "This is my passion," Dodge said, "I definitely want to go to a conservatory. A career in composition is my dream."

Information on the Young Composers Challenge can be found at [www.youngcomposerschallenge.com](http://www.youngcomposerschallenge.com)