

# Orlando composer CREATES with area youth

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Contributing Writer

Two of the greatest composers in world history, Mozart and Beethoven, began composing when they were young. In hopes that the youth of today would have opportunities to create music, Orlando composer Stephen Goldman initiated a competition called Young Composers Challenge (YCC), with

the support of UCF's Center for Research and Education in Arts, Technology and Entertainment (UCF-CREATE) and the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra. The competition is in its fourth year.

This year, about 100 young composers participated in a workshop on March 1, with world-renowned composers including Goldman and UCF Faculty Member Dr. Stella

Sung. Sung, the UCF-CREATE director, joined YCC early on. She helped Goldman to develop the schedule and to organize the competition. "The workshop in March was very successful," Sung said. "At the end of their day the students got to see, hear and feel the orchestra play."

After the workshop, participants had the summer to work on their own musical compositions. On August 1, 45 compositions were submitted for consideration. The judges include Goldman, Sung, composers Dan Crozier and Keith Lay and Music Director Christopher Wilkins.

"They are all winners already," Sung said. "This competition is about authoring students."

"Most composers want their entire lives to hear their compositions played by an

orchestra," Sung said. "This initiative is unique. A single individual stepped up to the plate to hire an orchestra for the benefit of these young people and for them to hear their compositions being played by a full orchestra."

Dr. Lisa Mills, a faculty member at the UCF School of Film and an affiliate at UCF-CREATE, has been working on a documentary about YCC since the summer of 2007. Mills described Goldman as "extremely generous, a philanthropist in the true sense of the word, an amazing man."

Mills saw an opportunity to make a documentary film about the challenge. "It is a unique story to tell because participating in the competition is a very daunting task for these students. It is no small thing," she said.

"Children are fearless," Mills said. "They have that

freedom to express that adults don't." Mills points out that the students "are between childhood and adulthood. They are 14- to 18-years-old. They struggle to maintain creativity while also growing up." The competition is open to children ages 13 to 18.

"The film will be 'about growing up and the composing process,'" Mills said. "Also about the parents who are extremely supportive and nurturing. They are all about the children."

"The concept of artists as introverted or isolated in corners may be at its end with this generation," Mills said. Mills' film on the challenge will be released around the summer of 2009.

"It is critical to nurture young composers," Mills said. "If we do not nurture them now, we are not going to have

new music in the future."

In her hopes of seeing YCC become bigger, Sung said, "We would love to see it go national, where students from all over the U.S. compete."

Sung urged everyone to attend the upcoming concert to support the young composers. "It will be fun to see these kids' compositions played by a full orchestra."

The orchestral and three-chamber-ensemble finalists will be announced today. In addition to cash prizes, the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra will play the finalists' work during a free, public concert on Sept. 28 at the Bob Carr.

For more information on YCC please visit [www.youngcomposerschallenge.com](http://www.youngcomposerschallenge.com).

Information on UCF-CREATE can be found at <http://create.ucf.edu>.

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The Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra performs the finalists' orchestral compositions at the 2007 Young Composers Challenge Finalist Concert on April 4, 2007. Orlando Composer Stephen Goldman initiated the YCC Challenge with the help of UCF's Center for Research and Education in Arts, Technology and Entertainment and the Philharmonic Orchestra.