

# Soloists making a Splash

## Teen musicians play with symphony

BY THANDI FLETCHER, TIMES COLONIST JULY 8, 2010



Victoria Symphony Splash soloist Phillip Manning, 18, plays violin at a media conference at the Victoria Marriott Inner Harbour yesterday.

**Photograph by:** Darren Stone, Times Colonist, Times Colonist

Teenage musicians Grace Ma and Phillip Manning offered a sneak peek yesterday of the pieces they will perform for thousands of people next month at the 21st annual Victoria Symphony Splash.

Ma, 16, and Manning, 18, are the young soloists chosen to play with the Victoria Symphony during its free outdoor concert on a barge anchored in the Inner Harbour on Aug. 1.

Ma, who says she feels "incredibly honoured" to have been chosen, will perform Addinsell's Warsaw Concerto on the piano. Manning will play the second movement of Bruch's Violin Concerto No. 1, saying he hopes to achieve a "personal best" at the concert. Although, he admits: "I guess I have to prepare for this now."

The annual concert is going ahead despite a series of obstacles thrown at the Victoria Symphony this year.

Faced with salary cuts across the board, and the loss of title sponsor Bayview Residences, the symphony created a new fundraiser called Band of Heroes. The goal of the campaign was to invite many local businesses and individuals to support the event, instead of finding one new title sponsor.

So far, \$51,000 has been raised.

According to Mitchell Krieger, executive director of the Victoria Symphony, the goal is to get 100 sponsors at \$1,000 apiece, so the fundraising initiative is "more than halfway there."

"What that demonstrates to me is that the community believes in Symphony Splash as a vitally important event," said Krieger.

That community support gives young soloists like Ma and Manning the opportunity to perform with the Victoria Symphony before an audience of more than 40,000.

The two soloists were chosen by maestra Tania Miller from a pool of about 30 young local musicians. Both said they have attended past Symphony Splash concerts as spectators.

Ma remembered 15-year-old pianist Hugo Wong's solo performance at the concert in 2008. "I really enjoyed his playing -- it was spectacular."

An honours student at Mount Douglas Senior Secondary School, Ma completed her ARCT Piano Performer's Diploma last year and placed second at this year's Don Chrysler Concerto Competition.

The concert won't be Manning's first time accompanied by the Victoria Symphony -- he also performed at the 2007 Young Musicians' Showcase. A recent graduate of Lighthouse Christian Academy, Manning has been accepted at the University of Victoria's School of Music. He was also the winner of the 2010 Don Chrysler Concerto Competition.

Since this year is the Canadian navy's centennial, Symphony Splash will have a nautical theme. Tours of HMCS Nanaimo and HMCS Edmonton will be open to the public from 1 to 4 p.m. at Ship Point.

In the evening, the symphony will perform an array of music, including Boyce's Heart of Oak, Guadalcanal March by Rodgers, and movie scores from popular Hollywood films Jaws and Titanic. As is tradition, the concert will conclude with Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture, accompanied by fireworks and cannons.

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