

Saskatoon Pianist wins 2017 Shurniak Concerto Competition



The Saskatchewan Music Festival Association (SMFA), Karen Unger, President is pleased announce that the 32nd SMFA Concerto Competition was won by Saskatoon pianist Godwin Friesen, with his performance of Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37*. He was accompanied by Bonnie Nicholson. Godwin received the first prize of \$2,000 and the opportunity to be a featured soloist in an upcoming season with the Regina Symphony Orchestra and the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra.

Godwin Friesen began piano at age seven and quickly realized his love for performance and composing. He placed first in piano at the 2015 National Music Festival, received the national Senior Mary Gardiner Award the same year, and has been named top pianist in Saskatchewan's provincial finals for the past two seasons. In 2016, Godwin presented a Bach concerto with the Amati Quartet, a solo recital in the Lyell Gustin House, and Saint-Saëns' *Carnival of the Animals* with pianist Thomas Yu and the SSO in their *Firebird* concert. He has performed regularly in the Caspian Trio and the Friesen Family Band. Godwin is currently in his first year at the Glenn Gould School of Music, studying on full scholarship with John O'Connor.

Twelve young musicians competed on Saturday, February 25, in the Riddell Theatre, University of Regina, Saskatoon. Rebecca Weger, a violinist from Regina placed 2nd and Sophie McBean, a pianist from Saskatoon placed 3rd. The competition was judged by Thomas Cosbey (Concertmaster of the Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra and winner of the 2000 Shurniak Concerto Competition), Thunder Bay; Elizabeth Raum (composer and oboist, formerly of Regina), Toronto; and Gordon Gerrard (Music Director of the Regina Symphony Orchestra), Regina.

Event Sponsor: Mr. William Shurniak

