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Newspaper

**Ventura County Starr**

(February 9, 2012)

**Thousand Oaks Philharmonic:** At concerts in Camarillo and Thousand Oaks, the orchestra will accompany seven young musicians ages 9-17 from Ventura County and neighboring communities as they play piano, electric string bass, cello and violin concertos, led by conductor Dr. John Roscignos. The concerts also will feature guest conductor Vlad Vizireanu, who performed as a pianist with the group and is working on a doctorate in conducting. Camarillo: 7:30 p.m. Feb. 10, United Methodist Church, 291 Anacapa Drive (donation requested of \$20 general admission, \$10 seniors, \$6 students). Thousand Oaks: 2:30 p.m. Feb. 12, Scherr Forum Theatre, Civic Arts Plaza, 2100 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd. (\$30 general admission, \$10 students). Ticketmaster, 800-745-3000 or [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com). Information: [tophil.org](http://tophil.org).

Read more: <http://www.vcstar.com/news/2012/feb/09/theater-dance-opera-and-culture-events/#ixzz1maGTM0dV>

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Newspaper

**Thousand Oaks Acorn**

(February 12, 2012)

**Westlake grad leads.rst T.O. Philharmonic concert of new year**

2012-02-16 / Dining & Entertainment

PLAY REVIEW

By Cary Ginell

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STRINGS—Cellist Drew Dahms, 17, performs a concerto with the Thousand Oaks Philharmonic on Feb. 12. EDWARD FRANCIS/Special to the Acorn The Thousand Oaks Philharmonic presented the first concert of the new year, Opus 32, on Sunday at the Scherr Forum.

The concert series features young artists from the greater Ventura County area in performances backed by a professional orchestra.

As always, the backgrounds and ages of the featured soloists were wide-ranging, the only common factor being their prodigious talents.

As a new feature of the concert, an alumnus is given the opportunity to lead the orchestra. In Sunday's concert, the honoree was Romanian-born Vlad Vizireanu, a Westlake High School graduate who first performed as a pianist in the Philharmonic's second concert 10 years ago. Now a seasoned conductor, Vizireanu led the orchestra in the opening piece, Beethoven's "Egmont Overture," with great precision and passion and without the benefit of a score.

The orchestra's regular conductor,

John Roscigno, then assumed the podium, conducting excerpts from concertos spanning three centuries.

Leading off the program was tiny Grace Chen, whose amazing talent belies her size. A thirdgrader at Beacon Hill Classical Academy, Chen is so small her feet cannot reach the piano pedals, necessitating the installation of a special extender (call it a pianist's booster seat for the feet) so she could manipulate them.

Her performance of the busy Rondo from Haydn's Concerto in G Major was joyful and full of verve, as was her ear-to-ear smile after finishing the difficult piece. At its conclusion, she was presented with so many bouquets of flowers, it was all she could do to see where she was going as she walked off stage.

Sixth-grader Khai Berry was the next performer, vigorously playing the delightful first movement from Dmitri Kabalevsky's Third Piano Concerto, which was written for and dedicated to young performers in the Soviet Union in 1952. Berry will be playing at the Gold Medal Honors Recital this spring at the Civic Arts Plaza.

Closing out the first set was 17-year-old Drew Dahms, a senior at Westlake High School, who is an exceptional talent on the cello. Dahms continued the pattern of fast, virtuosic pieces by playing Camille Saint-Saëns' Cello Concerto No. 1, a work whose three parts blend together in one continuous movement. The concerto playfully features the soloist and orchestra in a compelling call-and-response pattern, with the tremendously demanding final section drawing a sustained ovation from the audience.

The most unusual work of the afternoon began the second half, a movement from Jeff Beal's Concerto for (electric) Jazz Bass and Orchestra. Beal, an Emmywinning television composer, was in the theater to see his son Henry, a junior at Agoura High School, play a movement titled "Westward Expansion." The work has a minimalist flavor, with hypnotic figures played in the strings while the winds and maracas simulated a trainlike motion.

Fifteen- year- old Cameron Daly followed with one of the more familiar pieces of the repertoire, the opening movement of Felix Mendelssohn's only concerto for violin. Daly played with much poise and virtuosity on the technically challenging work, including a sensitively played cadenza.

Twin brothers Shannon and Sebastian Saw, both freshmen at Westlake High School, flawlessly played Vivaldi's methodical Double Concerto in A Minor for Two Violins.

Vizireanu returned to conduct the final piece, the opening movement from Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto, arguably the most famous of all works of this nature and one of the most difficult to master. Fifteen-year old David Fraley, a sophomore at Rio Mesa High School, proved up to the challenge, with a forceful and powerful performance.

[http://www.toacorn.com/news/2012-02-16/Dining\\_%28and%29\\_Entertainment/Westlake\\_grad\\_leadsrst\\_TO\\_Philharmonic\\_concert\\_of\\_.html](http://www.toacorn.com/news/2012-02-16/Dining_%28and%29_Entertainment/Westlake_grad_leadsrst_TO_Philharmonic_concert_of_.html)