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Yu wins third concerto competition as a violinist

By Anne Gelhaus

For the third straight year, Cupertino resident Timothy Yu will take the stage at the El Camino Youth's Symphony Concert as the winner of the symphony's concerto competition.

For this year's concert, set for Dec. 19, the 11-year-old violinist will play Sarasate's *Introduction and Tarantella* along with the orchestra. Timothy, who first picked up a violin at age 4, said the piece is his favorite of the works he's performed with the youth symphony.

"The beginning sounds good and romantic, and at the end it's loud and hyper," he explains.

The piece might also be the most difficult the young violinist has undertaken.

"Maybe this one's bigger," Timothy said. "I think I've progressed and gotten better over the years."

He credits his musical development in part to his teacher, Cupertino resident Zunxian Zhou, and to a rigorous practice schedule.

"I used to practice two hours a day or more," said Timothy, a sixth-grader at Hyde Middle School. "Now I have too much homework, so I usually practice for about an hour and a half--longer on the weekends."

This dedication earned Timothy a chair in the first violin section of El

Camino's senior youth symphony, making him the youngest musician in the section. It's also earned him honors at violin competitions sponsored by the Chinese Music Teacher Association of Northern California, where he came in first in 2003 and second in 2001.

Timothy said he likes both performing and competing and has thought about a career as a professional violinist.

"I haven't made my decision yet," said the young musician, adding that he likes the violin because "it's very emotional, and it gives your fingers exercise."

Once in awhile, Timothy will give his fingers a workout on a keyboard instead of strings and frets.

"I play the piano sometimes for fun," he said. "I never practice anymore."

El Camino Youth Symphony's holiday concert is set for Sunday, Dec. 19, at Spangenberg Theatre, Gunn High School, 780 Arastradero Road, Palo Alto. The program includes Anderson's *Christmas Festival*, the overture to Rossini's *La Gazza Ladra*, the waltz from Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty* and Dvorak's *Slavonic Dance No. 8, Opus 46*.

Tickets are \$5-\$10 at the door. For more information, call 650.327.2611 or visit www.ecys.org.

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