

Brazil's Cayres wins Iowa Piano Competition

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Bruce R. Miller, Sioux City Journal



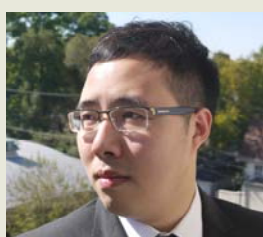
Victor Cayres
First Place



Christopher Goodpasture
Second Place



Moye Chen
Third Place



Jialiang Wu
Fourth Place



Joon Yoon
Fifth Place



Liana Paniyeva
Sixth Place

Playing Schumann's Piano Concerto in A Minor as if he had been performing it for years, Victor Cayres won the 2015 Iowa Piano Competition at the Orpheum Theatre Saturday night.

Hailing from Brazil, Cayres said his father's love for jazz music sparked an interest that prompted him to pursue a career in music. A Boston Pops album played a role, too. But unlike the other two finalists, he spent his early years studying karate, not music.

His moves, however, were as precise as any athlete's. He appeared the most confident of the three, finding a groove with the woodwinds that was impressive.

Full of flash and emotion, Christopher Goodpasture came in second with Grieg's Piano Concerto No. 1 in D Minor. In a taped biography, he said he often thinks about food while he's playing the piano. If that's the case, he must have had a great meal Saturday.

Easily the showiest soloist of the three finalists, the California native announced himself from his first notes. He held the audience's attention, complemented the Sioux City Symphony orchestra nicely and emerged with a performance that won whistles, cheers and admiration.

Moye Chen, the third-place finisher, was at a disadvantage with Brahms' Piano Concerto No. 1 in D Minor. Less flamboyant than the other two pieces, it didn't give him the moments that Goodpasture and Cayres enjoyed. It did, however, show he's a technician of the highest degree.

Chen embraced the work's quiet moments, smartly conveying the composer's intent.

Clearly, Goodpasture has one of those careers that will make headlines and attract many admirers. With a shock of red hair, he dazzled the way most blue-chip performers do.

Cayres, however, is his own kind of force. His subtle performance keyed off the other musicians, suggesting he wanted to fit in with the best, not overwhelm them.

As an introduction to the night of competition, the Sioux City musicians offered a very crisp version of Rossini's Barber of Seville Overture. If audience members were reminded of Bugs Bunny's cartoon, it only added to the moment.

While the votes were being tallied, the musicians played a fine rendition of Smetana's "The Bartered Bride" overture.

Two overtures, though, couldn't steal the night from the three finalists. They were the main attraction.

Cayres won \$7,500, Goodpasture got \$2,750 and Chen got \$1,500.

The panel of judges which oversaw all three days of the competition included:

Pavlina Dokovska
Mannes College,
The New School for Music

Ian Hobson
University of Illinois

Antonio Pompa-Baldi
Cleveland Institute of Music

The Iowa Piano Competition is an intensive three-day competition hosted by the [Sioux City Symphony Orchestra](#) in Sioux City, Iowa. For more information visit the Symphony website or call 712.277.2111.