

# Musical prodigies shine like Mozart

■ *Young composers asked to submit original music for contest*

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Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart is considered a brilliant composer of operas, symphonies and chamber music.

Mozart also wrote a set of variations on the music of the children's ditty that we know as "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star." The melody itself has been attributed to him.

Because composing starts with simple melodies like "Twinkle, Twinkle," Hey, Mozart! New Mexico wants to give today's young wannabe composers a chance to shine, too.

The statewide child composer project, now in its third year, is asking children 12 and under — those born on or after Feb. 28, 1995 — to submit their original melodies.

The focus is on the child composer's creativity, not on technical musical skills. The melodies should be about one and a half to two minutes long, should state a theme and repeat it. The melodies can be written out in music notation form or on a recording, and the composers may sing or play their piece.

"This is turning out to be more than we thought," said Brookes McIntyre, president and acting director of Hey, Mozart! New Mexico.

Young composers in the

project have performed for the American String Teachers Association, for students at Edward Gonzales Elementary School in Albuquerque and with the Albuquerque new music group Chatter.

"We were just invited to take kids to Santa Fe to perform during the legislative session and the kids in Las Cruces (in the project) will perform at school and regular concerts with the Las Cruces Symphony Orchestra."

The 2007 competition had 16 winning entries from among 100 submissions. The winning composers had their works arranged for orchestra, recorded on a CD, and last Sept. 7 the winners performed their melodies — and at the same sold-out concert — heard members of the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra play them.

The deadline for the 2008 contest is Feb. 29 and the original melodies must be postmarked by that date. Winners are expected to be announced in April.

Entrants should go to the Web site [www.heymozartnm.org](http://www.heymozartnm.org) for an application and a parental letter of agreement.

David Felberg, the NMSO's associate concertmaster, is the project's music director.

Hey, Mozart! New Mexico is a partnership with the NMSO, the LCSO, the National Hispanic Cultural Center with grants from the state Department of Cultural Affairs, the ASCAP Foundation and public donations.