



## National Finals Concert

January 17, 2016, 3:00pm

Walter Hill Auditorium, High Museum

Featured Guest Artist: Robert Spano, *piano*  
Helen Hwaya Kim, *violin* • Ted Gurch, *clarinet*  
Elizabeth Pridgen, *piano*

### “RAPIDO! NATIONAL FINALS”

*earthsongs*

Robert SPANO

*Robert Spano*

intermission

Rapido! Finalist Compositions:

*MVC*

Louis CRUZ

*Allomorphosis*

Kenneth LIM

*A Guide to Interior Places*

Kevin EPPICH

*Iris Variations*

Peter Van Zandt LANE

*Regressive Variations*

Mark BULLER

*Ted Gurch Helen Hwaya Kim Elizabeth Pridgen*

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## RAPIDO PARTNER ENSEMBLES



# Special thanks to our esteemed judging panel:

Michael Gandolfi, Libby Larsen, & Robert Spano

## Notes on the Program

**Louis Cruz, Northeast Finalist**

*MVC*

“Model-View-Controller” (MVC) is an architectural pattern used to create user interfaces in computer programming. The “model” in this system represents the structure of the data. The “view” is the visual representation of this data. The “controller” is what connects the model to the view, providing the logic used to filter or manipulate the data of the model based on the user’s input.

In writing this piece, I treated the form of theme and variations in the manner of the MVC structure. In this way, the theme is the piece’s model, and each variation acts as a different view. The rules and parameters used in each variation to manipulate and modify the theme act as the controller of the work. For instance, the first variation makes use of only every other note of the theme. Throughout the course of the piece’s nine variations, the theme is filtered and presented in various manners. Finally, the work comes to a close when the final variation ends with a statement of the theme reversed.

--Note by Louis Cruz

**Kenneth Lim, West Coast Finalist**

*Allomorphosis*

This piece is a set of variations on an original theme which consists of 3 statements of a 4-note motif, progressively growing more elaborate each time. Each variation represents a technique, not of performance but a *compositional* technique, which is utilized to present the theme in various disguises. The theme serves not so much as a melody or a fragment that resonates throughout the piece than as a device to hold together what might otherwise have been a wide stretch over fairly disparate material in a rather short amount of time. The music does occasionally go off on a tangent, developing the musical impression of what immediately precedes. The title comes from a term I coined from the words *allomorph* and *morphosis*.

--Note by Kenneth Lim

**Kevin Eppich, Midwest Finalist**  
*A Guide to Interior Places*

With *A Guide to Interior Places*, I attempt to present musical impressions of some of the interior places we all have within ourselves: emotions, affections, concerns, desires. While each of the four episodes does represent a very specific piece of my own experience, I let those remain my interior places. So, in order to create a more intimate connection between the audience and the performance, I do not reveal what they are and rather invite the listener to consider what of his or her own interior places may be brought to mind by the music as it is encountered. Nothing within our psyche, it seems, is ever simply linear, the various strands of experience, emotion, and thought intertwining in and out and around each other. This fluidity is reflected in the interplay of the musicians as they sometimes play alone, sometimes in pairs, sometimes altogether, sometimes seeming as three discrete voices merely occupying the same space-time, with no one arrangement sustaining for very long. From a technical perspective, the piece is perhaps less an example of traditional Theme and Variations and more a series of events interconnected by shared musical materials that, while presented at the opening, are perhaps too amorphous and indistinct at their first occurrence to properly be called a theme. The opening measures, then, should be seen as an invitation to look inward anticipating the excursions to follow.

--Note by Kevin Eppich

**Peter Van Zandt Lane, Southeast Finalist**  
*Iris Variation*

*Iris Variations* approaches the tradition of strophic variation form in a somewhat unusual way. There are nine variations, each using the same melody at progressively shorter lengths. The piece begins with the melody stretched out across the low-piano, appearing as a rhythmic ostinato-like foundation for fragments of the theme dancing and chasing above. Each variation jumps to the next without hesitation, highlighting contrasts in rhythm, mood, and surface texture. Like an aperture, each variation of the melody gets smaller and smaller – gaining momentum while also growing more recognizable – until finally the theme dilates into its most essential form in an ecstatic unison outburst!

Following some trends of variation forms in the last century of music, many of the variations are somewhat hidden, drawing more attention to the contrast between sections and less towards the original

theme. The length and location of each theme occurs in the following forms and instrumentation:

Variation 1: broken and elongated piano's bass clef (c. 56")

Variation 2: woven in between the violin and clarinet (c. 50")

Variation 3: in the pizzicato violin (c. 44")

Variation 4: lyrically in the clarinet (c. 38" \*theme in its originally composed form)

Variation 5: inverted, in the piano's bass clef again (c. 32")

Variation 6: stuttered, in canon in all instruments (c. 26")

Variation 7: in retrograde, triumphantly in piano and clarinet (c. 20")

Variation 8: in retrograde, spread across upper piano register (c. 14")

Variation 9: aggressively, all instruments, together (c. 8")

The piece is conceived as a fast middle movement, therefore the ending note is a bit inconclusive, and will act as a springboard into a following, slower movement.

--Note by Peter Van Zandt Lane

## **Mark Buller, Southwest Finalist** ***Regressive Variations***

*Regressive Variations* was written in Summer 2015 as an entry in the Rapido! Composition Contest. The contest rules specified that composers must write a theme and variations. In order to present my own take on the form, I chose a nontraditional route: rather than first composing an original theme, then developing it in subsequent variations, I instead wrote a complex, highly twisted 'variation' based on overlapping scales — a variation with no real subject. While this opening has no strong tonal center, it is structured in the familiar rounded binary form, as a throwback to Themes and Variations of years past. Furthermore, as with its 18th- and 19th-century cousins, the first half is relatively stable from a harmonic standpoint, while the second half wanders more.

In the subsequent variations, I gradually began to extract a recognizable theme using materials derived from that first variation. Simply put, the Classical form develops in reverse: at the beginning of the piece, the eventual theme is hidden within the texture, and only gradually does it coalesce.

Finally, toward the end of the work, we hear the long-awaited theme, presented in all three instruments. After we hear it in its entirety, the energy begins to grow again, and we hear material from the preceding variations, but out of order: now, momentum is increasing, propelling us to the hard-driving finale.

--Note by Mark Buller