

**On Repeat:  
A Concert of Pattern,  
Repetition, and Variation**

---

**Isaac Pyatt**  
percussion

*Program*

**Burritt Variations** (2012)

**Alejandro Vinao**  
(b. 1951)

*Solo de Vibraphone* from “*Le Livre de Claviers*” (1987)

**Philippe Manoury**  
(b. 1952)

**Stonewave** (1990)

**Rolf Wallin**  
(b. 1957)

*Intermission*

**equal / Scatter** (2016/2017)

**Isaac Pyatt**  
(b. 1996)

**Monobot** (2013)

**Andrea Mazzariello**  
(b. 1978)

**Spices: Seven Solos for Steel Pan** (2015)

Clavo  
Canela

**Dave Molk**  
(b. 1981)

## On Repeat

The purpose of this concert program is to examine differing ways that contemporary composers have used patterns and repetition as devices in their music. The program is divided into two halves, each with similar approaches to repetition in music, and similar regional influences. Alejandro Vaino and Philippe Manoury worked at IRCAM together in the 1980s and Rolf Wallin attended University of California - San Diego, where Philippe Manoury later taught. Andrea Mazzariello and Dave Molk were students at Princeton together, and Isaac Pyatt's music is influenced from the NYC-Post Minimalist music that recent Princeton graduates are creating.

However, there are more connections that can be made across the boundary. The first and final pieces develop in similar, lifelike variations of previous materials, often repeating musical moments but slightly changing them to create something new and take the piece in a new direction. The vibraphone manipulation in Manoury's work is likened to filters in electronic music, much like how the rules of *Monobot* are similar to functions on a drum machine. Both Wallin and Pyatt have created works that have a dense, rigid mathematical approach to the structure and patterns, on top of which the composer has carefully sculpted something special. The two halves of the concert are symmetrical in staging, but the instruments move around on stage throughout the concert.

The program opens with "**Burritt Variations**" by the London-based Argentinian composer Alejandro Vaino. In this set of constantly evolving variations, Vaino develops the theme through driving rhythmic patterns and counterpoint. - Pyatt

"The theme on which these variations are based has a quality reminiscent of some of the music of Latin America. In that sense it is a "latino" theme, but one that is difficult to pin down to a particular geographical area. Perhaps it is closer to the musical styles of the Caribbean, such as Salsa, with repeated phrases that shift against complex pulses. Yet, I am not aware of having chosen a theme belonging to a specific Latin-American tradition...." – Vaino

"The **Vibraphone solo** is the fourth movement of the cycle **Le livre des claviers** composed in 1988 for Les Percussions de Strasbourg.

I composed this piece in order to develop one of the unique defining characteristics of this instrument: the ability to dampen individual pitches independently. In this work the ending points of sounds are as important as the beginnings. There is a polyphony of appearance and disappearance of different sounds in which the performer has the choice to dampen sounds using fingers or mallets. As such, the fingers (or mallets) are frequently playing the role of filters in electronic music. Formally this piece is quite elaborate and functions as a series of free transformation of a basic musical structure, each one with varying degrees of different manipulations." – Manoury

In this work, Manoury uses a fractal-based system of harmony for propelling the piece, over which he can explore the many systems for manipulation of the sound of the vibraphone. - Pyatt

“For a long period after 1989 I was deeply involved in some peculiar mathematical formulas called "fractals". These formulas, used in the fast-growing field of "Chaos theory", are relatively simple, but they generate fascinating and surprisingly "organic" patterns when shown graphically on a computer screen, or played as music.

One should think that such a mathematical approach would lead to sterile and 'theoretical' music. The sound world of '**Stonewave**', however, is not one you would associate with math books. The steady, insistent pulse, and the use of sequences put squarely up against each other or divided by long rests suggest an invisible ritual.” – Wallin

This piece is also derived from a process of fractals, this time informing the rhythmic and accent patterns, as well as the form of the piece - Pyatt

**equal / Scatter** is an exploration of two compositional dichotomies: that of even or uneven groupings or processes, and the use procedural or intuitive methods of compositional generation. The driving forces of the piece are the composite rhythms generated by multiple implied polymetrical procedures, which first serve as a textural material underneath more straightforward harmony/melody, before growing to overtake the harmony and involve all voices in procedures leading towards points of unison alignment. These uneven polymetric rhythms are superimposed upon a strict, rigid structural form, which begins as disjunct against the composite rhythms but transforms to complement them.

This piece is based on repeated rhythmic patterns hinting at multiple meters, over which a texture is established and embellished. As the piece grows, the repeated rhythms take over the piece, resulting in a mathematically informed chorale progressed by rhythmic unisons. The composer's approach to intuitive freedom vs strict mathematics is reminiscent of the style of the composer Rolf Wallin. - Pyatt

“**Monobot** is the last in a series of “bot” percussion pieces. The others obsess over passing notes around the ensemble and shifting grooves and feels, and the intense interaction between players necessary to pull the music off is as much a point of focus as the notes on the page. Monobot comes out of these priorities but asks what one player is capable of doing alone, how ensemble writing might translate to solo performance, what you need to do as a performer and composer in order to create a kind of rhythmic counterpoint.” – Mazzariello

This piece is derived from a series of strict rules for adding and subtracting patterns, through a predictable repetition of meter and dynamic variations. These rules act

similarly to the functions on an electronic drum machine, adding and subtracting elements from a set “groove” - Pyatt

“**Spice** is a book of 7 soft and delicate solos for steel pan (double seconds). These solos explore the gentle, lyrical nature of the steel pan while retaining a rhythmic vibrancy and are a pure delight to play.” – Molk

The music of Dave Molk is often based on direct repetition and variation of previous materials. In these two short selections from “Spices”, the music grows out of very simple materials, through a very lifelike series of constantly evolving variations of similar material. - Pyatt