



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 8, 2016

---

**Pianist Matt Poon, wins 2016 E-Gré National Music Competition**



*-Photo Credit Ken Frazer*

**Brandon, MB** - The Eckhardt-Gramatté National Music Competition for the performance of Canadian and contemporary music is pleased to announce its 2016 prize winners:

<b>1st Prize</b>	-	<b>Matt Poon, piano</b>
<b>2nd Prize</b>	-	<b>Naomi Woo, piano</b>
<b>3rd Prize</b>	-	<b>Jesse Plessis, piano</b>
<b>City of Brandon Prize Best Performance of the Commissioned Work</b>	-	<b>Matt Poon, piano</b>

From 6 – 8 May 2016, eight of Canada's best emerging pianists were selected to gather at the School of Music, Brandon University for the **2016 Eckhardt-Gramatté National Music Competition** (E-Gré) in piano. The E-Gré Competition began in 1976 and is the most important annual Canadian and contemporary music competition.

Semifinals were held on Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, after which three finalists were chosen to perform in the final round of public recitals on Sunday, May 8<sup>th</sup>. Each

semifinal and final recital were required to include at least 50% Canadian music as well as this year's commissioned work *Mirari* by **Jeffery Ryan**.

First place winner, **Matt Poon**, received an almost \$17,000 first prize award including a cash prize of \$10,000, a three-week residency and debut recital in Italy at the Casalmaggiore International Music Festival, and a 10-15 city Cross-Canada Winner's Tour in November 2016.

Second prize winner, **Naomi Woo**, received a cash prize of \$5,000 and third prize winner, **Jesse Plessis** received a cash prize of \$3,000. The City of Brandon Prize of \$1,000 for the best performance of the 2016 commissioned piece, *Mirari* by **Jeffery Ryan**, was awarded to **Matt Poon**.

"The only reason to commit to a project like this is if you really, really love new music." says 2016 Winner Matt Poon. " I truly love this repertoire and I care about it so much. I feel so honoured to be part of this group of pianists. This has been a very emotional journey and I'm so grateful."

Juror David L. McIntyre shares that, " It was so interesting to get a new perspective on this competition, by moving from the composer's chair to the jury panel. Meg kept saying that we, the jury, were working so hard - it didn't feel like that at all! The competitors did so much of the work, and we were able to really enjoy it. I'm leaving Brandon with a great list of new repertoire to check out, thanks to the research and discoveries by these pianists. And I'm feeling so motivated to practice, and to compose!"

Naomi Woo on finishing second: " The best part of finishing second is that I get to do this all over again. I really want to. It's a huge undertaking, but the opportunity to meet everyone and perform like this makes it all worthwhile."

The 2016 E-Gré Competition gratefully acknowledges the support of the RBC Foundation and Emerging Artist Project, Canada Council for the Arts, Manitoba Arts Council, SOCAN Foundation, Brandon University and the E-Gré Development Fund, City of Brandon, Casalmaggiore International Festival and many corporate and private donors.

**For more information please contact:**

Leslie Hutchinson  
Administrative Intern  
Eckhardt-Gramatté National Music Competition  
QE II Music Building, Brandon University  
270-18<sup>th</sup> Street, Brandon MB R7A 6A9  
Phone: 204-728-8212  
Fax: 204-728-6839  
Website: <http://e-gre.ca>



**BACKGROUNDER 1:**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Prize Winner, E-Gré Competition**  
**May 8, 2016**

---

**Matt Poon, piano**



Pianist and composer **Matt Poon** advocates music of our time by performing, creating, and researching. As a pianist, Mr. Poon specializes in music of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, including repertoire requiring extended techniques. As a former member of Tactus and gamUT, Mr. Poon performed chamber works by living composers including Paul Moravec, Bill Ryan, Paula Matthusen, Joseph Schwantner, and the Bang-On-A-Can composers, and worked under the direction of Jeff Milarsky, Gary Kulesha, Wallace Halladay, and Norbert Palej. Mr. Poon has given a lecture-performance on Ligeti Etudes at the Manhattan School of Music. As a composer, his music has been performed by the American String Quartet, Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra, and Manhattan School of Music Orchestra.

Mr. Poon holds a M.Mus. in Piano Performance and a M.Mus. in Composition from the Manhattan School of Music. His major mentors include Anthony Demare, Carol Ann Aicher, Midori Koga, Brian Current, Roger Bergs, and Chan Ka Nin.