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[September 20, 2014](#)

## IVCI Romantic/Post-Romantic finals – day one

By [Tom Aldridge](#)

Without going back and checking, I believe Friday's was the first IVCI concert where nothing was repeated from start to finish--at least in a single concert day. The explanation is simple: In the Romantic/post Romantic finals each finalist plays only one concerto. And if they happen to have picked different ones from the two others for that evening's repertoire choices . . . need I say more?



As with the Classical finals, U.S. player Tessa Lark began Friday's program, this time with Sir William Walton's Concerto for Violin and Orchestra (1939). To go with performing tradition, Lark unfurled her tone, like an eagle spreading its wings, to a full, rich, yet well contained vibrato. She made a beautiful sound throughout this thorny, complex, three-movement work. And it's almost unnecessary to mention her technical skills at weaving her way through this mostly rapid sound thicket. A violin beautifully played can make anything sound beautiful. Lark proved it.

Jinjoo Cho, the first of five S. Korean women, followed with another work new to the IVCI: Erich Korngold's Violin Concerto in D, Op. 35 (1946), well known for borrowing music from some of his famous film scores. This was one of Cho's better accounts, with her fingerwork never straying into adjacent pitches. Yet she failed to project Tessa Lark's smoothness, her vibrato sounding more like a series of interrupted tremolos. Her rapid display passages in the third movement were occasionally roughly executed. But Cho gave us top notch technique in sharing some of Korngold's film music.

It remained for Ji Yoon Lee to provide us with a repertoire standard with the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto in D, Op. 35, to end the program. To start we heard more interrupted tremolos as with Cho, these segueing into nervous vibrati. Though her lovely, muted second movement theme was roughly executed, her third movement vibrato was smoother, accompanied with excellent staccato work with good dynamic and tempo nuances. Her playing had been similar in the preliminaries and semis.

On Saturday we hear the last three finalists: Ji Young Lim, Yoo Jin Jang and Dami Kim playing respectively the concertos of Brahms, Tchaikovsky and Sibelius. Following the latter, at about 11 p.m. the laureates will be announced probably in reverse order from the following: the gold medalist, the silver medalist, the bronze medalist and the fourth, fifth and sixth-place laureates--the high point of the two-week event.

*Sept 10; Hilbert Circle Theatre*