

THEME IN SEARCH OF VARIATIONS II

FOR QUINTET

MARK APPLEBAUM, 2007

Theme in Search of Variations II

Mark Applebaum, 2007

for the sfSound Ensemble

to Tania, Marisol, Patricia, Jeff, Mauricio, Blair, Michael, Michelle, & Rob

Duration

approximately 4 minutes

Instrumentation

Bb clarinet doubling bass clarinet

percussion

piano

violin

cello

* * *

Although it is an autonomous piece that may be performed on its own, *Theme in Search of Variations II* invites musical responses in the form of other pieces—variations that might be performed in succession on a given concert. It was originally composed as a provocation to my students of the graduate composition seminar at Stanford University, composers who then wrote individual pieces—variations—of their own.

Theme in Search of Variations II may benefit from an autonomous conductor. However, it was composed with a particular ensemble in mind whose instrumentalists—the pianist, in particular—could share the conducting role. Such performances will clearly necessitate a stage setup that accommodates this arrangement.

TRANSPOSITIONS

Clarinet sounds one major 2nd lower than notated.

Bass clarinet sounds one major 9th lower than notated.

Crotales and glockenspiel sound two octaves higher than notated.

ACCIDENTAL POLICY

Accidentals apply only to the noteheads to which they immediately adhere. Additional "courtesy" natural signs are often supplied.

PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTATION

Section A:

- Three drums: high, mid, and low. The drums should be lightly prepared with sympathetically buzzing or jangling objects that add a subtle noisy element.

Section B:

- A set of twelve varied dry sounds (e.g. woodblock, cow bell, metal pipe, glass bottle, pie pan, muted splash cymbal, tin can, plastic container, cardboard box, single log drum pitch, almglocke, muted opera gong). Arranged as a keyboard octave from C to B, the twelve sounds are notated on a five-line staff with a treble clef. A few of the selected instruments may project a determinate pitch. In such cases the instrument should be placed in a position in the octave that corresponds to the notated pitch class. For example, if an almglocke with pitch class E is selected, it should be placed in the position of the note E (and thus sounded whenever E appears in the score). Care should be taken to arrange any instruments of determinate pitch in a relationship that does not suggest a tonal center. For example, if the aforementioned almglocke with pitch class E were selected, a gong with pitch class B would be a poor choice, whereas a gong with pitch class A# would be favorable.

Section C:

- Crotales (upper octave only)
- Glockenspiel
- Vibraphone (with motor off)

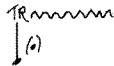
GRAPHIC NOTATION

The creative ensemble will collectively determine an interpretation for measures 6, 13, 19, & 24. The ensemble's interpretation of a given measure may, or may not, invite one or more players to tacet.

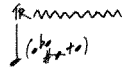
LEGEND



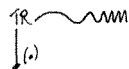
A grace note figure to be played as fast as possible. The sound of the figures may be shorter than they appear graphically on the page.



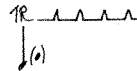
Trills are made to the note given in parentheses.



A trill made to the parenthetical notes in the order given.



The trill speed changes.



"Limping trill"; instead of an even oscillation between the base note and trilled note, the duration of the base note is substantially longer (approximately 3:1 or 4:1) than the trilled note; the pattern should be regular, however.



Glissandi occur over the entire duration given. Stems are provided to depict duration and do not suggest moments of re-articulation or emphasis—unless accompanied by an accent mark. The end pitch is heard as such, albeit briefly.



Progression from one state to another.



Quarter-tone flat.



Quarter-tone sharp.



Niente.



Flutter tongue in clarinet; rapid, unmeasured tremolo in percussion and strings.

Bass Clarinet



Tongue slap.



An audible sound of air being blown through instrument without traditional sounding pitch; the blowing sound can be embellished with a hissing at the mouth.



Pitch is played on the bass clarinet and also vocalized (hummed) simultaneously in any octave.

Percussion



Dead stroke.



Rim shot.

Strings



Molto sul ponticello; bowed at the bridge to produce a glassy sound; this should be exaggerated.



Molto sul tasto flautando; bowed at the fingerboard to produce an airy sound; this should be exaggerated.



Over pressure: excessive, grinding bow pressure and slow bow speed causing noise and severe pitch distortion.



Airy sound of indeterminate pitch bowed on the bridge.



Ordinario; cancels sul pont, sul tasto, over pressure, and air.



Snap pizzicato.



Left hand pizzicato.



The highest pitch on the string; well above the fingerboard.

GETT.



Arco gettato, the bow bounces off the string and rebounds to make successive attacks.

CLB GETT.



Col legno battuto gettato, the wood of the bow bounces off the string and rebounds to make successive attacks.



"Half harmonic"; note is fingered lightly to produce noisy, semi-uncontrolled pitch.

BASS CLARINET

PERCUSSION

PIANO

VIOLIN

CELLO

3/4 = 60 \triangle A

3 DRUMS

5/16

3

6:5

4

11/16

3

BASS CLARINET

PERCUSSION

PIANO

VIOLIN

CELLO

8

17

3

BASS CLARINET

PERCUSSION

PIANO

VIOLIN

CELLO

12

Musical score for measures 12-15. Instruments include Bass Clarinet, Percussion, Piano, Violin, and Cello. Includes performance instructions like 'AIR SOUND - PLAYED ON THE BRIDGE', 'ARC SP', 'ORD', 'SUB PP', 'TR', 'SP', and '6ETT.'.

Large hand-drawn graphic with various symbols, including a speech bubble with 'F', a star, a star with 'L', and a speech bubble with 'I'. It also contains some abstract shapes and arrows.

Continuation of musical score for measures 12-15, showing Bass Clarinet and Piano parts. Includes performance instructions like 'PP', 'PIZZ', and 'TR'.

BASS CLARINET

PERCUSSION

PIANO

VIOLIN

CELLO

15

Musical score for measures 15-19. Instruments include Bass Clarinet, Percussion, Piano, Violin, and Cello. Includes performance instructions like 'ARC', 'mp', 'p', and 'pp'.

Continuation of musical score for measures 15-19, showing Violin and Cello parts. Includes performance instructions like '5', '3', '7', '8', 'TR SP', 'ORD', 'SP', 'PP', 'SIP', and '5 ff'.

2

18

BASS CLARINET

PERCUSSION

PIANO

VIOLIN

CELLO

8"

21

BASS CLARINET

PERCUSSION

PIANO

VIOLIN

CELLO

10"

3

23 $\frac{4}{4} = 72$ \triangle B

BASS CLARINET

PERCUSSION

PIANO

VIOLIN

CELLO

Musical score for measures 23-30. The score includes staves for Bass Clarinet, Percussion, Piano, Violin, and Cello. The Piano part includes the instruction "12 DRY SOUNDS" and "BY SWELLING AND RECEDED AD LIB; SMALL ACCENTS ON EACH PHRASE GROUP." The Violin and Cello parts include the instruction "PIZZ SIM...".

31

BASS CLARINET

PERCUSSION

PIANO

VIOLIN

CELLO

Musical score for measures 31-38. The score includes staves for Bass Clarinet, Percussion, Piano, Violin, and Cello. The Piano part features complex chordal textures and melodic lines.

37

BASS CLARINET

PERCUSSION

PIANO

VIOLIN

CELLO

43

BASS CLARINET

PERCUSSION

PIANO

VIOLIN

CELLO

CRESCENDO

$\triangle C$
= 60

(10 BY CLARINET)

PED

L.V.

49

B♭ CLARINET

CROTALES 6

SEMPRE p, L.V.

GLUCK 3

VIBES

SEMPRE p, L.V.

PED →

VIOLIN

CELLO

57

CLARINET

PERCUSSION

VIOLIN

CELLO

6

10-2-17 MENLO PARK
Mark Chapin