RICE UNIVERSITY

Grand Variations for large orchestra

by

Daniel James Zajicek

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

Doctor of Music

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ABSTRACT

Grand Variations for large orchestra

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*Grand Variations* is a work for large orchestra built on an original theme and six variations. My primary concerns when composing were communication, continuity, and distortion. To musically communicate an idea repetition is essential, and the type of repetition presented in theme and variations provided what I was looking for. In addition, the fact that the theme will be repeated over and over leads to a built in continuity. The final concern, distortion, may be achieved by pulling away from a more straightforward presentation of the thematic material.

Two additional elements played a large role in the work—cyclic forms, and quantum physics. The composition *Déserts* by Edgard Varese, and the jazz work *Nefertiti* by Wayne Shorter, both contain strong cyclic features. *Nefertiti* uses the same melody repeated over and over, while *Déserts*, on the other hand, repeatedly presents the same musical gestures, and sound objects, but with slight changes to achieve its own cyclic sound world. These two works framed the way that I approached variations, yet are at odds with each other. Through my reading of quantum physics, I found a way to join the two into a working structure, and the book, *The Grand Design*, by Stephen Hawking and Leonard Mlodinow, helped me to do it. Because of this, I decided early on to honor that influence, and the title *Grand Variations* reflect that.
Grand Variations
for orchestra

Daniel Zajicek
2012
Instrumentation

Piccolo
2 Flutes
2 Oboes
English horn in F
2 Clarinets in B♭
Bass clarinet in B♭
Bassoon
Contrabassoon

4 Horns in F
3 Trumpets in C
Flugelhorn in B♭
2 Trombones
Bass Trombone
Tuba

Timpani - 23”, 32”

Percussion 1
  vibraphone, metal wind chimes, snare drum,
  wood block, suspended cymbal, xylophone,
  tam tam, bass drum, crash cymbals

Percussion 2
  glockenspiel, wood block, bass drum,
  4 tom-toms, triangle, snare drum

Harp

Violins I
Violins II
Violas
Cellos
Contrabasses

Duration: 8 min.

Note on transpositions:
All octave transpositions for piccolo, contrabassoon, contrabass, xylophone, and glockenspiel are still in effect.
Grand Variations
Variation I, Expanding the singularity  $M \dot{=} 80$

**Picc.**

2 Fl.

2 Ob.

E. Hn.

2 Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

C. Bsn.

Hn. 1, 3

Hn. 2, 4

3 Tpt.

Flhn.

Tbn. 1, 2

B. Tbn.

Tuba

Temp.

metal wind chimes

Harp

Variation I, Expanding the singularity  $M \dot{=} 80$
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<tr>
<td>Picc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Fl.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Cl.</td>
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<td>B. Cl.</td>
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<td>Bassoon</td>
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<td>2 Cbs.</td>
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<td>Cbs.</td>
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**Score Details**

- **Key**: C major
- **Time Signature**: 4/4
- **Tempo**: Moderato
- **Dynamic Markings**:
  - Piano
  - Crescendo
  - Diminuendo
- **Other Notations**:
  - Slurs
  - Staccato
  - Legato
  - marcato

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**Additional Notes**

- The score includes a variety of wind and string instruments, with specific notations for dynamics and articulation.
- The overall style appears to be classical, with a focus on melodic and harmonic development.
- The score is well-organized, with clear indications for each section and instrument.
Grand Variations

Var. IV, Distant points of light M. $\frac{3}{4}$ = 58

Perc.

2 Fl.

2 Ob.

E. Hn.

2 Cl.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

C. Bn.

Hn. 1, 3

Hn. 2, 4

3 Tpt.

Flhn.

Tbn. 1, 2

B. Tbn.

Tuba

Temp.

triangle

vibraphone

Harp

Vlns. 1

Vlns. II

Vls.

Vcs.

Cbs.
Grand Variations
Variation V, Dreamy and expressive  \( M, \frac{q}{40} \)
Grand Variations

Var. VI, Majestic  M  \( \frac{1}{4} \) = 80

molto rit.

sopr. cymb.

state drum
Grand Variations