

June 5, 2022

SCORE

Alexander Wu

Rework:
Variations on a Theme by Monk

for string quartet

Duration: c. 8'

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Program Note

The theme on which the variations are based comes from a lesser-played jazz standard titled “Work” by the great jazz pianist Thelonious Monk. Somewhat unusually, Monk only ever recorded it once, which was released in a 1956 compilation album *Thelonious Monk and Sonny Rollins*. Although Monk seemed to have canned the tune, the more I played and improvised on it, the more I became enchanted by its eccentric melody, colorful harmony, and unpredictable rhythm. Inspired by both Monk’s interpretation and my own improvisational practice, I felt compelled to further develop and transform these improvisatory ideas in a different setting, and this string quartet became a perfect space for my explorations. The four variations in this piece allude to and sometimes break musical archetypes of the past. The outer two, titled “Head In” and “Head Out,” pay homage to the forms commonly found in bebop and free jazz; the inner two, titled “Passacaglia” and “Fugue,” follow and extend the Baroque forms.

Performance Notes

All BPM markings are approximate.

The accuracy of metric modulations should take precedence over the exact BPM.

All grace notes should be played on the beat.



Overpressure.



Normal pressure.



Ricochet.

fmp

pp. 10–12
(var. 4)

An arrow indicates a cue, and a dotted line indicates a coordinated entry.
Try not to coordinate when an arrow or dotted line is not present.

Rework: Variations on a Theme by Monk

for string quartet

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I. Head In

$\text{♩} = 48$

$\text{♩} = 60$

Tpo 1° ($\text{♩} = 48$)

Violin I
p *f* *ff* *f* *p* *f*

Violin II
p *f* *ff* *f* *p* *f*

Viola
p *f* *ff* *fp* *fp* *f* *p* *f*

Violoncello
sf *fp* *ff* *sf* *p* *sf* *p* *f* *fp* *f*

$\text{♩} = 60$

Tpo 1° ($\text{♩} = 48$)

Violin I
fp *fp* *p* *f* *p*

Violin II
sf *p* *f* *p* *sub.* *f* *p*

Viola
fp *fp* *f* *p*

Violoncello
sf *p* *sf* *p* *f* *p*

A

Musical score for measures 7-10. The score is written for four staves: two treble clefs (top two) and two bass clefs (bottom two). Measure 7 begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. Measures 8 and 9 feature piano fortissimo (*fp*) dynamics with crescendo and decrescendo hairpins. Measure 10 returns to forte (*f*). The bottom two staves include a large slur under measures 7-10 and a fermata over the final measure. The bottom staff also features a dynamic marking of *f* *fp* *fp* *f* with hairpins.

⁻⁵ ♩ = ♩ (♩ = 60)

Musical score for measures 11-14. The score is written for four staves: two treble clefs (top two) and two bass clefs (bottom two). Measure 11 starts with piano fortissimo (*fp*) dynamics. Measure 12 features piano (*p*) dynamics and includes the instruction "sul pont." (sul ponticello). Measure 13 features piano (*p*) dynamics and includes the instruction "flaut." (flauto). Measure 14 features piano (*p*) dynamics and includes the instruction "flaut." and the Roman numeral "IV". The bottom staff includes a dynamic marking of *p* *fp* *f* *pp* with hairpins.

B

16 $\text{♩} = \text{♩} (\text{♩} = 75)$

mf pp *mf pp* *mf pp* *f* *pp* *mf* *pp*

pizz. *(pp)*

p

19 $1''$

mf *pp* *mf* *pp* *f* *ff*

mf *pp* *f* *ff*

mf *pp* *f* *ff*

ord. *ord.* *ord.* *arco ord.*

f *ff*

23

mf *pp* *mf* *pp* *f* *ff*

mf *pp* *f* *ff*

mf *pp* *f* *ff*

ord. *arco ord.*

$\text{♩} = \text{♩} (\text{♩} = 94)$

Musical score for measures 26-29. The score is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It features four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The dynamics are marked as *ff* and *p*. The music includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are also some slurs and accents.

Musical score for measures 30-33. The score is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat. It features four staves. The dynamics are marked as *f*, *p*, *sf*, *p*, *p poss.*, and *pp*. The music includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are also some slurs and accents. A *Stra* marking is present above the first staff in measure 31.

II. Passacaglia

Musical score for measures 34-37. The score is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat. It features four staves. The dynamics are marked as *pp* and *pp sempre*. The music includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are also some slurs and accents. A *flaut.* marking is present above the third staff in measure 36.

39

Musical score for measures 39-44. The score is written for four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Measure 39 starts with a treble staff containing chords and a bass staff with a melodic line. A flute part enters in measure 40. Dynamic markings include *pp*, *p espr.*, and *pp*. A *flaut.* marking is present above the flute staff in measures 40 and 41.

45

Musical score for measures 45-48. The score is written for four staves. A key signature change to two flats (B-flat and E-flat) is indicated by a 'D' in a box above the first staff in measure 45. The music features triplets and a *poco* dynamic marking. Dynamic markings include *pp* and *p espr.*.

49

Musical score for measures 49-52. The score is written for four staves. The key signature has two flats. The music features triplets and a *poco* dynamic marking. Dynamic markings include *p*, *pp*, *mf*, and *mp*. A *molto* marking is present at the bottom of the page.

E

Musical score for measures 52-54. The score is written for four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Bass 1, and Bass 2. Measure 52 features triplets in the Treble 1 and Bass 1 staves, with dynamics *mf* and *p*. Measure 53 includes five-fingered chords in the Treble 1 and Bass 1 staves, with dynamics *f*, *p*, *f*, *p*, and *f*. Measure 54 shows a dynamic shift from *f* to *p* in the Treble 1 staff, and *f* to *p* in the Bass 1 staff.

Musical score for measures 55-56. Measure 55 features five-fingered chords in the Treble 1 and Bass 1 staves, with dynamics *p* and *fmp*. Measure 56 includes five-fingered chords in the Treble 1 and Bass 1 staves, with dynamics *fmp*, *fmp*, *fmp*, *p*, *mp*, and *mp*.

Musical score for measures 57-59. Measure 57 features five-fingered chords in the Treble 1 and Bass 1 staves, with dynamics *fmp*, *fmp*, *fmp*, *fmp*, *mf*, and *f*. Measure 58 includes five-fingered chords in the Treble 1 and Bass 1 staves, with dynamics *p sub.*, *p sub.*, *p sub.*, and *p sub.*. Measure 59 features five-fingered chords in the Treble 1 and Bass 1 staves, with dynamics *p sub.* and *flaut.*

III. Fugue

60 flaut. *pp* *ppp* rit. a tempo ord. *p*

66 *mf* *p* *mf p* *mf p* *mf* *mp* ord. *mf*

72 **F** *mf p* *mf p* *mf p* *mf* *f* *f* *f* *f* *fp* *fp* *fp* *f*

(non trem.)
stacc.

G

8va

77

fmp fmp fmp fmp p espr.

fmp fmp fmp fmp p mfp mfp

sf mp sf mp sf mp sf mp p

H

83

pp

(non trem.) stacc.

mfp mfp pp p f

mfp mfp pp p f

pp p f

88

mf

3 3

p mf p

pizz. p mf p

IV. Head Out

Senza misura*

reaccent about every 3" w/o coordination c. 20" add scratches ad lib. c. 2" (loosely synchronized)

reaccent about every 3" w/o coordination c. 20" add scratches ad lib. c. 2" (loosely synchronized)

reaccent about every 3" w/o coordination c. 20" add scratches ad lib. c. 2" (loosely synchronized)

c. 3" arco or pizz. repeat this gesture about once every 3" until the loosely synchronized gliss. pizz.

ff $p \leftrightarrow ff$ **f** $p < f$ **p** **p** **pp**

ff $p \leftrightarrow ff$ **f** $p < f$ **p** **p** **pp**

ff $p \leftrightarrow ff$ **f** $p < f$ **p** **p** **pp**

ff $p \leftrightarrow ff$ **f** $p < f$ **p** **p** **pp**

p $p \leftrightarrow ff$ **p**

* The cello is still in tempo for another bar.

** Do not re-articulate the notes in parentheses

98 Rubato, slow and hesitant

Vln. I

pizz.

IV

repeat until the cello starts playing arco

p *<mf>* *p*

Vln. II

pizz.

IV

repeat until the cello starts playing arco

p *<mf>* *p*

Vla.

pizz.

repeat until the cello starts playing arco

p *<mf>* *p*

Vc.

c. 3" (pizz.)

III

repeat 3x, then pause for about 2" before proceeding

f *p* *<mf>* *p*

99

Vln. I

arco

repeat 3x, then pause for about 2" before proceeding

f *p poco a poco cresc. al f*

Vln. II

arco

repeat until the first violin starts playing repeated notes

f *p poco a poco cresc. al f*

Vla.

arco

repeat until the first violin starts playing repeated notes

p poco a poco cresc. al f

Vc.

arco

repeat until the first violin starts playing repeated notes

p *poco a poco cresc. al f*

100 Unwavering, each following their own steady tempo

repeat until everyone has finished, then pause for about 2" before proceeding

f *f* *ff*

play at a slightly faster tempo than the first violin

repeat 3x, then pause until the first violin pauses; start together on the next page

Vln. II *f* *f* *ff*

play at a slightly slower tempo than the second violin

repeat 3x, then pause until the first violin pauses; start together on the next page

Vla. *f* *ff*

play at a slightly faster tempo than the viola

repeat 3x, then pause until the first violin pauses; start together on the next page

Vc. *f* *ff*



101 Rubato, changing the tempo semi-frequently

ricochet 1-3" repeat 5-10x

Vln. I *fp* *fp* *fp*

ricochet

repeat until the first violin starts playing ricochet gliss.

Vln. II *fp* *fp* *fp* *fp* *fp* *fp* *fp* *fp* *fp* *fp* *fp* *fp* *f*

repeat until the first violin starts playing ricochet gliss.

Vla. *f* *p* *f*

repeat until the first violin starts playing ricochet gliss.

Vc. *f* *p* *f* *p*

Slow, each following their own steady tempo

102

Violin I: *fp* 1-3" repeat 2x, then pause until the viola cues; start in tempo in the next system

Violin II: *fp* 1-3" repeat 2x, then pause until the viola cues; start in tempo in the next system

Viola: *p* 2x repeat until everyone has stopped and cue everyone; proceed without pausing *f* *p*

Violoncello: *p ↔ f* 3-5" repeat 4x, then pause until the viola cues; start in tempo in the next system

103 In tempo ♩ = 94 *

Violin I: *ff*, *ffmp*, *ff*

Violin II: *ff*, *ffmp*, *ff*

Viola: *ff*, *ffmp*, *ff*

Violoncello: *ff*, *ffmp*, *ff*

* The tempo here should be around the same as the tempo at rehearsal letter B.