

A Mancunian artist's practical creative reply to just criticism

He Was Despised

Variations on a theme of Handel
An Entertainment for String Orchestra

Nicholas Simpson

I had the idea for a set of variations on the famous *Messiah* aria some years ago, at a time when I had experienced a chastening professional reverse, largely self-inflicted, one which caused a generally robust self-esteem to falter.

Any music dwelling on the things for which I had proper cause for self-pity, however, would be over embarrassingly quickly, and in the interests of balance I thought I would have to deal with my general all-round startling good fortune as well.

(The piece is described on the title page as an “entertainment” because while I was writing it I imagined that it was being played at a concert performed by people who liked to enjoy what they were playing, attended by people who had come out in order to have a good time).

A truncated version of Handel’s aria is followed by eight variations:

One, in which I lament that I am *Not a Famous Conductor*;

Two, in which I regret that I am *Not a Famous Composer*;

Three, in which I notice that I am getting *A Bit Thin on Top*;

Four, in which I acknowledge that I am *Not Much Good at Football*;

Five, in which it occurs to me that nonetheless I have *Drink in the House and Money in the Bank**;

Six, in which I consider that I have a *Lovely Wife and Kids*;

Seven, in which I contemplate the *Little House in the Country*;

Eight, in which it occurs to me that I am *Not Dead Yet***.

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Duration – c.17 minutes.

* Pre credit-crunch. Please do not ask for a loan.

** Correct at time of writing. Consult local press for details.

He Was Despised

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Nicholas Simpson

Largo

♩ = 48

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

Double Bass

mf *p* *tr* *mf* *p* *tr* *mf*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

p *p* *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr* *mf* espr. *mf* espr. *p* *p* *p* *mf* *p* *mf*

Var. I
Grandioso

11

rit.

♩ = 80

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

mf espr. *f* *f* *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr* *f* *f* *f* *f* *f* *f*

19

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

f

26

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

f

div.

(omit the divisi if the basses can manage the high notes)

32

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

f

61

meno mosso

B

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

pp

pp

pp

pp

cresc. div.

cresc.

pp cresc.

70

unis.

poco *f*

unis.

poco *f*

poco *f*

mf cresc.

poco *f*

mf cresc.

pp

pp

pp

pp

6

79

f

f

f

f

f

div.

f

f

f

f

Maestoso

Var. II

Andante mesto e rubato

$\downarrow = 63$ div.

98

Vln. I

div.

Vln. II

pp

cresc.

mp

dim.

Vla.

pp

cresc.

mp

dim.

Vc.

pp

cresc.

mp

dim. pizz., div.

Db.

pp

mp

mp

dim.

102

unis. **C**

Vln. I *pp* *tr* *p*

Vln. II *pp* *tr* *(b)*

Vla. *pp* *espr.* *div.*

Vc. *div.* *pp*

Db. *arco, unis.* *div.* *pp*

106

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf* *f*

Vla. *mf*

Vla. *mf* *f* *f*

Vc. *mf* *f* *f*

Vc. *mf* *f* *f*

Db. *p* *mf* *f*

This musical score page features six staves for string instruments. The top two staves are for Violin I and Violin II, both in treble clef. Below them are two staves for Viola, in alto clef. The bottom two staves are for Cello and Double Bass, both in bass clef. The music is written in B-flat major or D minor (three flats) and common time. It begins at measure 110, indicated by a rehearsal mark. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, trills (marked 'tr'), and dynamic markings like 'ff' (fortissimo). A specific instruction 'sul G' appears above the second violin staff towards the end of the excerpt. The piece concludes at measure 119, marked with a final double bar line and a fermata over the last note.

[illegible]

119

Vln. I *p* *mp*

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *p* *mp*

Vc. *p* *mp*

Db. *poco cresc.*

123

Vln. I *f* *rit.*

Vln. II *f* *div.* *p*

Vla. *f* *mf dim.*

Vc. *f* *dim.* *pizz., div.*

Db. *f unis.* *mp dim.*

127

Vln. I *pp* *con sord.*

Vln. II *pp* *con sord.*

Vla. *pp* *inside players only*

Vc. *pp* *inside players only*

Db. *arco* *div.* *pp*

This musical score is for measures 154 through 160 of 'The Swan' from 'The Nutcracker'. The score is written for a full orchestra, including Violins I and II, Viola, Violoncello (Vc.), Double Bass (Db.), and Double Bassoon (Db.). The key signature is B-flat major (two flats), and the time signature is 3/4. The score features a variety of musical notations, including dynamics (pp, mp, p, f), articulation (pizz., arco), and performance instructions (2 soli, tutti). A large 'E' in a box is placed above the Violin I staff in measure 156, indicating a specific performance instruction or a section marker. The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines, and the measures are numbered 154 through 160 at the bottom.

This musical score page contains measures 166 through 175 of 'The Swan' from 'The Nutcracker'. The score is written for a full orchestra and includes the following parts and markings:

- Vln. I:** Measures 166-175. Markings include *pp* and *3* (triplets).
- Vln. II:** Measures 166-175. Markings include *dim.*, *pp*, and *3* (triplets).
- Vla.:** Measures 166-175. Markings include *arco*, *dim.*, *pizz.*, *mp*, *dim.*, *pp*, and *2 soli*.
- Vc.:** Measures 166-175. Markings include *dim.*, *pp*, *tutti*, *poss.*, *pizz., tutti*, *mp*, *mp sub.*, *2 soli*, *arco*, and *pp*.
- Db.:** Measures 166-175. Markings include *dim.*, *mp*, and *pp*.

The score is in 3/4 time and features a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The tempo is marked 'Andante'.

* This harmonic, or something like it, sounding 8ve higher than written, should be playable just above the nut on the G string

222

poco sul pont.

col legno

15

Vln. I

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vln. II

Vla.

Vla.

Vc.

Vc.

Db.

pp dim.

poco sul pont.

pp dim.

poco sul pont.

pp dim.

pp dim.

pp dim.

2 soli

2 soli arco

2 soli, arco

arco

pp

233

ord.

col legno

ord.

pp poss.³

ord.

pp poss.³

col legno

pp dim.

2 soli

pp

pp

pizz., tutti

pp poss. pizz., tutti

pp poss. pizz., tutti

pp poss.

Var. IV
Siciliana ♩. = 42

243

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

div.

p

solo

mp

arco, unis.

p

arco

p

248

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

p

p

253

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

sul E

p

unis.

tutti

div.

unis.

p

rit.

A Tempo

258

breve **H** 17

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

p

pp

pp

262

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

p

265

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

pp

268

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

271

rit.

mutes off

mf

mf

unis.

mf

(omit the division if the basses can manage the high notes)

mutes off

mf

mf

mutes off

mf

276 Var.V ♩ = 144

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

f

f

f

f

f

mutes off

f

283

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

dim.

f

dim.

289

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

mf

mf

p

pizz.

arco

mf

mp

pizz.

arco

mf

f

mf

296

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

arco

f

f

mp

f

302

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

ff

mp

f

pizz.

309

I *pizz.*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

mp

p

arco

tr

mf

mp

tr

pizz.

mf cresc.

arco

f

mp

mf

316

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

cresc.

f

pizz.

arco

f

cresc.

f

f

322

Vln. I *ff* *dim.*

Vln. II *ff* *dim.*

Vla. *ff* *dim.*

Vc. *ff* *dim.*

Db. *ff* *dim.* *meno ff*

327

Vln. I *mf dim.*

Vln. II *mf dim.*

Vla. *mp dim.*

Vc. *mp dim.*

Db. *ff* *mf dim.*

333

Vln. I *p* *mf* *f* *pizz.* *arco* *mf* *mp*

Vln. II *pp cresc. molto* *mf*

Vla. *p* *mp cresc. molto* *mf*

Vc. *p* *f* *pizz. arco* *mp*

Db. *f* *pizz. arco* *mp*

339

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

mp

mf

pizz.

arco

5

344

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

p

f

p

f

f

f

pizz.

arco

mp dim.

351

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

ff

ff

ff

ff

ff

ff

div.

356

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

dim.

unis.

div.

pizz.

mf

mp

361

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

arco

p

p

p

dim.

p

366

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

arco

pp

pp

pizz.

arco

pp

Var. VI

♩ = 48

372

Vln. I *f*

Vln. II *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f* arco

Db. *f* (unis.)

mf dim.

379

Vln. I *f*

Vln. II *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

Db. *mf* dim.

mf dim.

386

Vln. I *f*

Vln. II *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

Db. *mf* dim.

p

pp

(div.)

K

393

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

p

mp cresc.

mf dim.

p

cresc.

mf dim.

p

cresc.

pp cresc.

mf dim.

pp

cresc.

mf dim.

(unis.)

mp dim.

398

sul G

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

mf espr.

cresc.

f

mf cresc.

f

ff

mf espr.

cresc.

f

ff

mf cresc.

f

ff

mf cresc.

f

ff

mf cresc.

f

ff

405 **L**

Vln. I *ff*

Vln. I *ff*

Vln. II *ff*

Vla. *ff*

Vc. *ff*

Vc. *ff*

Db. *ff*

unis.

poco dim.

poco dim.

sul G

sul D

(unis.)

411

Vln. I *mf dim.*

Vln. II *mf dim.*

Vla. *mf dim.*

Vc. *f dim.*

Vc. *f dim.*

Db. *f dim.*

rit.

espr.

mp dim.

mp

div.

unis.

417

Vln. I *mp* *pp* *p* *pp*

Vln. II *div.* *p dim.*

Vla. *cresc.*

Vc. *p* *p dim.*

Db. *p*



Var. VII

422 ante $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$. post ($\text{♩} = 70$) solo violin; quasi ad lib ma con moto

Solo Vln. *p*

Vln. I *sul D* *pp* *pp* *pp*

Vln. II *pp poss.* *tutti* *p*

Vla. *pp* *pp poss.* *p*

Vc. *pp poss.*

Db. *pp* *div.* *p*

429

Solo Vln. *p* *espr.* *p* *pp* *sul A*

Vln. I *poco cresc.* *pp* *pp*

Vln. II *pp* *p* *pp* *pp* *sul D*

Vla. *pp* *p* *pp*

Vc. *p* *pp*

Vc. *pp* *p* *pp*

Db. *p* *pp*

437

Solo Vln. *mf* *3*

Vln. I *p* *sul D*

Vln. II *pp poss.* *p* *mp dim.*

Vla. *pp poss.* *p*

Vc. *pp poss.* *p*

Vc. *p*

Db. *p*

*Basses should only play the small notes here if there aren't enough cellos to play the lowest cello line

poco rit. **Quasi Adagio** *tr*

M

443

Solo Vln. *mf strongly* *dim.* *pp*

Vln. I *p* *pp* *dim.*

Vln. II *p dim.* *pp*

Vla. *p* *pp*

Vc. *p* *pp* *dim.*

Vc. *pp*

Db. *pp*

rit.

451

Solo Vln. *p*

Vln. I *pp poss.*

Vln. II *pp* *pp poss.*

Vla. *pp poss.*

Vc. *pp poss.*

Vc. *pp poss.*

Db. *pp poss.* *pp*

464

pp poss. *cresc.* *ff* *cresc.* *ff* *f* *f* *fz* *fz* *f*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

cresc. *ff* *ff* *fz* *fz* *f*

[illegible]

483

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

meno f

f

meno f

f

meno f

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

pizz.

mf

31

490

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

f

f

f

f

f

arco

f

497

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

f

f

f

32

502

Violin I (Vln. I) and Violin II (Vln. II) are in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). Viola (Vla.) is in alto clef with a key signature of two sharps. Violoncello (Vc.) and Double Bass (Db.) are in bass clef with a key signature of two sharps. The score shows measures 502 through 505. Measure 502 has a measure rest for Vln. I and Vln. II. Measures 503 and 504 contain triplets in all parts. Measure 505 features a fortissimo (ff) dynamic marking. The notation includes various musical symbols such as beams, slurs, and articulation marks.

[illegible]

515

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

arco

pizz.

mf

3

523 **P** Ancora poco piu allegro 33

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

p

531

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

p

538

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

mp

544

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

mf

3

3

550

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

mf

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

mf cresc.

3

3

3

3

556

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

f

f

f

f

f

dim.

dim.

dim.

dim.

dim.

dim.

div.

pizz.

3

3

3

3

3

3

Helter Skelter

35



567

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.



Musical score for measures 582-587. The score includes staves for Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Db.).

- Vln. I:** Treble clef, key signature of two flats. Measures 582-583 feature triplets of eighth notes. Measure 584 features a triplet of eighth notes with accents. Measures 585-586 feature triplets of eighth notes with accents and a *dim.* marking in measure 585.
- Vln. II:** Treble clef, key signature of two flats. Features continuous sixteenth-note patterns with accents throughout the measures. A *dim.* marking appears in measure 585.
- Vla.:** Alto clef, key signature of two flats. Measures 582-583 feature triplets of eighth notes. Measures 584-586 feature continuous sixteenth-note patterns. A *dim.* marking appears in measure 585.
- Vc.:** Bass clef, key signature of two flats. Measures 582-583 feature quarter notes. Measure 584 has a *div.* marking. Measures 585-586 feature half notes with accents. A *dim.* marking appears in measure 585.
- Db.:** Bass clef, key signature of two flats. Measures 582-583 feature quarter notes. Measure 584 has a *div.* marking. Measures 585-586 feature half notes with accents. A *dim.* marking appears in measure 585.

A musical score for five instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 12/8. The score consists of seven measures. Measures 1-5 contain complex rhythmic patterns with triplets and slurs. Measure 6 begins with a dynamic marking of *p*. A box containing the letter 'S' is placed above the first staff in measure 3. The word 'arco' appears above the cello part in measure 6. The score ends with a double bar line in measure 7.