Four Variations on a Theme of Nine

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FOUR VARIATIONS ON A THEME OF NINE

by

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FOUR VARIATIONS ON A THEME OF NINE

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Western Michigan University, 1999

This composition represents four variations of a projected total of nine. The variations are based on the number nine having a nine-note theme that utilizes a nine-note scale. Nine is also prominently featured in the meters, rhythms, and harmonic construction. The main harmonic consideration is pandiatonicism using the nine-note scale, although bitonal chords, positioned a ninth apart, are used quite prominently also.

The work is for full orchestra, augmented with saxophone, harp, piano, and four percussionists.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

INSTRUMENTATION ................................................................. iii
NOTES OF EXPLANATION ....................................................... iv
SCORE ................................................................................... 1
INSTRUMENTATION

2 Flute (Second doubling Piccolo)
2 Oboes (Second doubling English Horn)
2 Clarinets in Bb
1 Bass Clarinet
1 Saxophone (Alto and Tenor)
2 Bassoons
1 Contra Bassoon
4 Horns in F
2 Trumpets in C
2 Trombones
1 Bass Trombone
1 Tuba
Timpani
Percussion 1
  Marimba, 4 High Toms, Xylophone, Tam-Tam
Percussion 2
  Vibraphone, 4 Low Toms, Marimba, Crash Cymbals, Suspended Cymbal
Percussion 3
  Triangle, Snare Drum, Vibraphone, Anvil, 4 High Toms, Tam-Tam
Percussion 4
  Glockenspiel, Bass Drum, Tam-Tam, Low Bongo
Harp
Piano
Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Cello
Double Bass

Duration: 12 minutes
NOTES OF EXPLANATION

The tom parts in the percussion are written on a bass clef staff, but should not be tuned to the pitch corresponding to its placement on the staff. Of the set of four high toms, the number two drum (E on the staff) should be tuned approximately a minor third lower than the number one drum (G on the staff). Likewise, the number three drum (C on the staff) should be tuned approximately a minor third below the number two drum, and the number four drum (A on the staff) approximately a minor third below the number three drum. The low toms should be tuned an octave below the corresponding high drum pitch.

The timpani roll beginning in measure 159 should be performed on an inverted cymbal placed on the timpani head. Use an appropriately sized cymbal for the timpani head for optimal effect.

In measures 160-163, all passages, where indicated, perform random crescendo and decrescendo. This is to be slight and not to obscure the timpani, glockenspiel, harp, piano, viola, cello, and double bass. The descending line in the glockenspiel and piano are especially to be heard.

The marimba part in measures 195-197 does not perform the accelerando with the rest of the orchestra, but retains its tempo until it fades out.

The vibraphone parts in measures 225-226 should be played on a single vibraphone with the motor on.
Four Variations on a Theme of Nine

Nathan R. Barber
Fl.

Eng. Hn

Cl

B. Cl

Sax.

Bsn

Cbsn

Hn

Ton

Timp.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Perc. 4

Hp

Pro.

Vln I

Vln II

Vln III

Vc

Db