

BARNYARD VARIATIONS

on Old MacDonald Had a Farm

By Andrew H. Dabczynski (ASCAP)

INSTRUMENTATION

Full Score	1
Violin I	8
Violin II	8
Viola	5
Cello	5
String Bass	5

This piece is a creative set of humorous variants on the familiar “Old MacDonald” folk song. Every orchestra section is featured in a variation, each musically imitating a different barnyard animal. Students explore contemporary techniques with a bluegrass flare. This piece makes an excellent opening or closing piece for concerts.

PROGRAM NOTES

Barnyard Variations is a creative set of humorous variants on the familiar “Old MacDonald” folk song. Set within a bluegrass context, every orchestra section is featured in a variation, each musically imitating a different barnyard animal using special techniques. In the six variations, (1) the first violins imitate birds chirping, (2) the violas play like squeaking mice (listen for the snapping mousetrap!), (3) the cellos create a mule baying, (4) the second violins—with help from the firsts—sound like clucking chickens, (5) the basses “moo” like cows, and finally (6) the whole orchestra wraps it up with a barnyard hoedown!

Note from the Editor

In orchestral music, there are many editorial markings that are open for interpretation. In an effort to maintain consistency and clarity you may find some of these markings in this piece. In general, markings for fingerings, bowing patterns, and other items will only be marked with their initial appearance. For a more detailed explanation of our editorial markings, please download the free PDF at www.alfred.com/stringeditorial.

X
extended position

-
shift

,
bow lift/reset

(b), (#), (b)
high or low fingerings

▮ ▮ or V V
hooked bowings

I hope you will find these explanations to be helpful. Best wishes with all of your musical endeavors!



Chris M. Bernotas
Director of String Publications



NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

Originally written as a piece to introduce young children to string instruments, *Barnyard Variations* is a set of variants on the familiar “Old MacDonald” folk song. Every orchestra section imitates a different barnyard animal in a unique variation. Throughout the piece, the director and group should explore the prescribed techniques to best emulate animal sounds. The introduction and statement of the theme (mm. 1–10) are in bluegrass style; notes should not be played staccato, and slides should be emphasized where indicated. Violin double stops are encouraged, though parts may be divided. A marked pause ends this section before the first variation begins (m. 11) at a slower tempo. Here (mm. 11–18), the first violins imitate barnyard birds, with trills and quick grace note chirps. The optional individual or small group solo line, up one octave, will enhance the birdlike effect. Going forth without pause and at the original, faster tempo, the second variation features the violas (mm. 19–26). Mice are imitated with light pizzicato accompaniment, then a squeaking sound as the violas play the given rhythm on the A string between the bridge and tailpiece (mm. 23–24). All strings employ “Bartok pizzicato” on the last note of the variation (m. 26, beat 4) with the string slapping the fingerboard, as the mousetrap snaps! A pause precedes an introduction to the next variation (mm. 27–30), establishing a new key (G major), meter ($\frac{3}{4}$), and tempo. The third variation (mm. 31–55) features the celli as they imitate a mule. Harmonic clashes, grace notes, and sudden accents emulate the “hee-haw” baying of the mule. A fermata and crescendo on the third beat of measure 55 propel the group to the fourth variation. Here the second violins—often doubled by the firsts—imitate chickens. Minor seconds, quick grace notes, and short repeated down-bow strokes create the clucking sound (mm. 56–63). Attention to bowings and divisi marks, dynamics, and accidentals will enhance the effect. Again, a pause ends this variation. A much slower tempo; long, legato bowing; and glissandi characterize the fifth variation (mm. 64–76) in which the basses imitate cows. In measures 69–71, the basses slide their finger to create a distinct “mooing” sound; gliss slides are indicated for other instruments as well. The final variation recreates the initial bluegrass mood (mm. 77–87) with harmonized fiddling throughout. Care should be taken in measures 81–83 to balance voices as the animals are recapped, especially noting a sudden ritard to accommodate the basses’ final “moo.” The piece ends with a typical two-measure triple-fiddle bluegrass tag (mm. 86–87).

For the Sebago-Long Lake Music Festival, Harrison, Maine

Barnyard Variations

on Old MacDonald Had a Farm

FULL SCORE
Duration - 3:45

By Andrew H. Dabczynski (ASCAP)

Moderately fast (♩ = 96)

Violins I
Violins II
Viola
Cello
String Bass

f detached but not staccato

f detached but not staccato

f detached but not staccato

f detached but not staccato

f detached but not staccato

f detached but not staccato

1 2

Vlins. I
Vlins. II
Vla.
Cello
Str. Bass

mf *opt. div.*

mf *opt. div.*

mf *div.*

mf

mf

sim.

3 4

Score for measures 5 and 6, featuring Violins (Vlns.), Viola (Vla.), Cello, and String Bass (Str. Bass).

Measure 5: Violins I and II play eighth-note patterns. Viola plays eighth notes. Cello and String Bass play eighth-note patterns.

Measure 6: Violins I and II play eighth-note patterns. Viola plays eighth notes. Cello and String Bass play eighth-note patterns.

5 6

Score for measures 7 and 8, featuring Violins (Vlns.), Viola (Vla.), Cello, and String Bass (Str. Bass).

Measure 7: Violins I and II play eighth-note patterns. Viola plays eighth notes. Cello and String Bass play eighth-note patterns. Cello has a marking *opt. div.* with an accent.

Measure 8: Violins I and II play eighth-note patterns. Viola plays eighth notes. Cello and String Bass play eighth-note patterns. Cello has a marking *opt. div.* with an accent.

7 8

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

f

9

10

"Barnyard Birds"
Slower (♩ = 60)

Opt. solo or small group

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

mf

legato

mp

legato

arco

mp

legato

11

12

The image shows a musical score for measures 13 and 14 of the piece 'The Rose Tree'. The score is written for five instruments: Violins I and II, Viola, Cello, and String Bass. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. A large red watermark 'Only Purchase' is overlaid diagonally across the score.

Measure 13:

- Violins I:** Starts with a trill on D5, followed by a half note E5, a quarter rest, a half note D5, and a quarter rest. Trills are indicated above the first and third notes.
- Violins II:** A half note D4, quarter note E4, half note F#4, quarter note G4, half note A4, and quarter note B4.
- Viola:** A half note D4, quarter note E4, half note F#4, quarter note G4, half note A4, and quarter note B4.
- Cello:** A half note D3, quarter note E3, half note F#3, quarter note G3, half note A3, and quarter note B3.
- String Bass:** A half note D2, quarter note E2, half note F#2, quarter note G2, half note A2, and quarter note B2.

Measure 14:

- Violins I:** Trill on D5, trill on E5, trill on D5, and a half note C#5. Trills are indicated above the first three notes.
- Violins II:** A half note D4, quarter note E4, half note F#4, quarter note G4, half note A4, and quarter note B4.
- Viola:** A half note D4, quarter note E4, half note F#4, quarter note G4, half note A4, and quarter note B4.
- Cello:** A half note D3, quarter note E3, half note F#3, quarter note G3, half note A3, and quarter note B3.
- String Bass:** A half note D2, quarter note E2, half note F#2, quarter note G2, half note A2, and quarter note B2. The measure ends with a 'pizz.' (pizzicato) marking.

The image shows a musical score for measures 15 and 16. The instruments are Violins I and II, Viola, Cello, and String Bass. The key signature is one sharp (F#). Measure 15 starts with a box containing the number 15. The Violin I part has a 'non div.' marking and a '-3' indicating a triplet. The Viola part has a 'pizz.' marking. The Cello and String Bass parts have a 'pizz.' marking. Measure 16 has a 'Section' marking. The score includes a large red watermark reading 'Preview' and 'Legal Use Required'.

Vlns. I *p* *legato* *tr* *-2* *tr* *-2* *tr* *tr* *rit.*
 Vlns. II *p* *legato*
 Vla. *p* *legato* *arco* *pp*
 Cello *p* *legato* *arco*
 Str. Bass *p* *legato*

17 18

“Mice”
 Tempo I (♩ = 96)
 19 *pizz.* *pp*
 Vlns. I *pp*
 Vlns. II *pizz.* *pp*
 Vla. *mf* *pizz.* *pp* *pizz.*
 Cello *pp* *pizz.*
 Str. Bass *pp*

19 20 21

23

Vlns.

II

Vla.

Play behind bridge on A string

Cello

Str. Bass

22 23 24

"Mule"
Faster ($\text{♩} = 120$)

I
Vlns.
p *sfz* *f*

II
ord. *mf* *sfz* *f*

Vla.
mf *sfz* *f*

Cello
sfz *f*

Str. Bass
sfz *f*

25 26 27 28

*Bartok snap pizz.

31 *non div.*

Vlns. I *mp*

Vlns. II *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Cello *mf*

Str. Bass *mp*

29 30 31 32 33 34

1. 2. 40

Vlns. I *sfz* *sfz* *p* *f*

Vlns. II *sfz* *sfz* *p* *f*

Vla. *sfz* *sfz* *p* *f*

Cello *f*

Str. Bass *f*

35 36 37 38 39 40

Score for measures 41-46, featuring Vlns. I & II, Vla., Cello, and Str. Bass.

Measures 41-46 show a sequence of notes and rests, with dynamic markings *sfz* and *p*. The Cello part includes a first ending bracket labeled *x1* over measures 41 and 42.

41 42 43 44 45 46

Score for measures 47-53, featuring Vlns. I & II, Vla., Cello, and Str. Bass.

Measures 47-53 show a sequence of notes and rests, with dynamic markings *mp*, *mf*, and *sfz*. A first ending bracket labeled *x1* is present over measures 47 and 48.

47 48 49 50 51 52 53

Violins I and II, Viola, Cello, and String Bass, measures 58-60. The score includes a large red 'Legal Use' watermark. Measures 58 and 59 show a rhythmic pattern with 'div.' and 'V' markings. Measure 60 shows a change in dynamics and articulation, including 'pizz.' and 'mf' markings.

Vlns. I
 Vlns. II
 Vla.
 Cello
 Str. Bass

div.
 div.
 div.
 arco x4
 arco
 f
 p
 p
 p
 p

61 62 63

“Cows”
 Much slower (♩ = 54)

64
 div.
 mp
 non div.
 legato
 mp
 legato
 mp
 legato
 mp
 legato
 mf
 legato

-2
 -1
 -1
 -3
 -3
 1
 -1
 0
 1
 -2
 -2
 -1

1.
 2.
 3
 -3
 1
 -1
 V
 V
 V

64 65 66 67 68

Score for measures 69-72, featuring Vlns. I & II, Vla., Cello, and Str. Bass.

Measures 69-72 show a sequence of chords and melodic lines. The Str. Bass part includes fingerings (-2) and dynamic markings (*mf*). The Vlns. I & II and Vla. parts also feature *mf* dynamics in measure 72.

Score for measures 73-76, featuring Vlns. I & II, Vla., Cello, and Str. Bass.

Measures 73-76 show a sequence of chords and melodic lines. The Vlns. I & II and Vla. parts include *mp* and *p* dynamics. The Cello and Str. Bass parts also feature *p* dynamics. Measure 73 includes a *div.* marking. Measure 76 includes a *p* dynamic marking.

"The Whole Barnyard"
Tempo I (♩ = 96)

77

Vlns. I *f*

Vlns. II *f*

Vla. *non div.* *f*

Cello *f*

Str. Bass *pizz.* *f*

78

Vlns. I *f*

Vlns. II *f*

Vla. *f*

Cello *pizz.* *p*

Str. Bass *p*

81

div. *pizz.* *p*

tr *tr* *tr* *p*

tr *tr* *tr* *pizz.*

p

behind bridge

80

81

arco -3 sudden rit. a tempo 84

Vlns. I *f* *ff*

Vlns. II *f* *ff*

Vla. *ord.* *p* *f* *ff*

Cello *arco* *f* *ff*

Str. Bass *arco* *pizz.* *ff*

82 83 84

Vlns. I *p* *ff*

Vlns. II *p* *ff*

Vla. *p* *ff*

Cello *pizz.* *arco* *p* *ff*

Str. Bass *arco* *ff*

85 86 87