

Variations on a Theme by Carl Nielsen

Carmen Gassi

Carl Nielsen was known primarily as a composer of symphonic repertoire, most notably his six symphonies. He was, however, quite prolific in many compositional forms and styles including four part hymns.

This set of variations is based on a beautiful hymn composed by Nielsen that is sung during the Christmas season. The title “Forunderligt at Sige” translates roughly to “Strange to Say” or perhaps “Wonderful to Say”. The hymn setting uses lyrics written by Nikolai Grundtvig and while the lyrics don’t really affect the setting for clarinet quartet, I have tried to keep the phrasing Nielsen used for the lyrics present in the variations.

Due to the gentle nature of this hymn the Eb soprano and Eb alto clarinets have been omitted. This is a challenging but rewarding selection for your medium to advanced clarinet quartet.

Carmen Gassi is a graduate of the Faculty of Music at the University of Western Ontario in London, Canada. He holds an undergraduate degree in Theory and Composition, studying composition and counterpoint with Peter Paul Koprowski, a Masters degree in performance studying clarinet with Robert Riseling and advanced conducting with Jerome Summers. Mr. Gassi has composed and arranged many works for concert band, orchestra and a variety of small ensembles. Mr. Gassi is the founding principal clarinet with Kindred Spirits Orchestra in Markham and several other orchestras and ensembles in the Toronto area.

*Please contact the composer if you require any further information about this piece
or his availability for commissioning new works and appearances.*

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DIFFICULTY RATING: Medium-Difficult
3 Clarinets, Bass Clarinet

VARIATIONS ON A THEME BY CARL NIELSEN

Forunderligt at Sige

Carmen Gassi

Andante $\text{♩} = 80$

B♭ Clarinet 1

B♭ Clarinet 2

B♭ Clarinet 3

B♭ Bass Clarinet

mf

p

mf

p

mf

p

mf

p

5

6

7

8

9

f

f

f

f

10

11

12

13

14

mp

p

p

p

15 16 17 18 19

f

f

f

f

20 21 22 23 24

pp *f* *p* *mp*

pp *f* *p* *mf*

pp *f* *p*

pp *f* *p* *mf*

VARIATION I
meno mosso

25 27

p

p

mf *p*

p

28 29 30

mf

p

mf

f

mf

f

31 32 33

mf

mf

mp

34 35 36

p

p

p

p

37 38 39

f

f

f

f

VARIATION II
Allegretto ♩ = 92

40 41 42 43

p *mf*

p *mf*

p *mf*

p *mf*

f

f

f

f

44 45 46 47

mp

p

p

p

f

f

f

mp

mp

mp

f

f

f

f

mf

48 49 50 51

f *sub.p* *f* *sub.p*

52 53 54 55

f *p* *f* *f*

f *p* *f* *f*

f *p* *f* *f*

f *p* *f* *f*

VARIAION III
Adagio $\text{♩} = 60$

56 57 58 59 60 61

pp *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf*

pp *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf*

pp *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf*

pp *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf*

62 63 64 65 66

p *mf*

67 68 69 70 71

pp

72 73 74 75 76

f *p*

77 78 79 80

pp

VARIATION IV
Allegro ♩ = 80

81 82 83 84 85 86

f *sub. pp*

87 88 89 90 91 92

f

93 94 95 96 97

98 99 100 101 102

103 104 105 106 107

p *p* *p* *p*

f *f* *f* *f*

108 109 110 111 112

113 114 115 116 117

118 119 120 121 122

pp *pp* *pp* *pp*

f *f* *f*

123 124 125 126 127 128

Four staves of music in 3/4 time, key of B-flat major. Measures 123-128. Measure 123 starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The music features eighth and sixteenth notes, with some measures containing triplets. A large 'PREVIEW' watermark is visible across the page.

129 130 131 132 133 134

Four staves of music in 3/4 time, key of B-flat major. Measures 129-134. The music continues with eighth and sixteenth notes, including some triplet patterns. A large 'PREVIEW' watermark is visible across the page.

135 136 137 138 139 140

Four staves of music in 3/4 time, key of B-flat major. Measures 135-140. Measures 135-138 continue the previous patterns. Measures 139 and 140 feature a piano (*p*) dynamic and include a fermata over a half note. A large 'PREVIEW' watermark is visible across the page.

141 142 143 144 145 146

Immediately Slower $\text{♩} = 40$

VARIATION V
Vivo $\text{♩} = 112$

pp *ppp* *f* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp*

147 148 149

f *f*

151 152 153 154

mf *mf* *mf* *mf*

155 156 157

158 159 160

161 162 163

f *sub. pp*

f *sub. pp*

f *sub. pp*

f *sub. pp*

f

f

f

f

164 165 166

sub. p

sub. p

sub. p

sub. p

167 168 169 170

ff

ff

ff

ff

Piu Allegro

171 172 173

f

p

f

p

f

p

f

p

f

p

174 *molto rit.* 175 176 *Vivo*

f *f* *f* *f*

accel. 177 178 179 *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*