

THE NEW STYLE AND VARIATION

VARIATION FORM

DEVELOPING VARIATION

VARIATION TASKS

VARIATION FORM BENCHMARKS

SUMMARY

Variation sets and variation form have a huge influence on the New Style and most other styles I have created.

Variation form is an ideal for many reasons: like variation form, Ideas Original is primarily about exposing possibilities, development and transformation of material into greatness. Variation sets have more potential for explicit semantic meaning than any other form of non-lyric music (through dialogue with the original material and between variations). It accommodates extremely diverse approaches: each variation has the ability to assert (like most works) but also to question, subvert or transcend, contradict, transfigure - through the fact that variations are both related but much more autonomous than 'sections' in other forms. It allows the composer to: contextualize single objects by placing them next to others (a complex object gains significance in dialectic with a simple one), display more diversity without weakening the consistency of a concept ("full commitment"), and codify entire new languages by the way they interact and differ from the known subject (the principle of the Rosetta Stone). Variation is the optimum arena to display genius and compare modes of thought.

Beethoven's "Diabelli variations" is the major source for my realization of the exalted potential of the form, but also the sheer invention and juxtaposition of James Joyce (see: "Joycean music", "mature style")

The New Style originally began as a linear variation set based on a subject, and it retains this orientation on a much larger level - the listener is in the midst of a cosmic argument on every major issue, reflecting a philosophical world of complexity and flux - the idea web, stratified truth and coexisting, diverse aesthetic languages. Each musically symbolic object has a variation section in its "intellectual package" - providing balance, differing perspectives, counterarguments, and support.

The variation approach is generalized through "variation tasks" - predetermined prompts that each suggest a different orientation towards the variation subject.

Loosely based on the explicitly divided domains seen in variation form

Though it may converge and "bleed" into complexity, it begins from a scientific 'isolation'

Generally *comparative* - as in variation form, meaning is created by juxtaposition of autonomous objects

Conceptual variation: vars hinge on the "grand subject" of the domain, as "different ways to address/express the subject"

Analogous to ways artists and cultures have addressed human universals throughout history (death, birth, love, god, etc.)

Denying the foolish, reductionist idea of "one answer"

Able to balance itself (allows inclusion of *anything*, b/c it can be rescued by the larger context and/or juxtaposition)

Versus weak "full commitment" composers with one-off conceits = reductionist

Allows full commitment and universal ambition to coexist

Experimental or language modules: multiple vars of *one* language (module as space/domain), versus disparate vars under a concept

But still could address a grand subject... New worlds will probably function this way (b/c no disparate POV's)

Through convergence/total connectivity, an idea presented in one object can effect the events in others objects, breaking down autonomy

Reflective of complex systems - complex systems indicates that the segmentation of variation form cannot hold

Resulting in a higher complexity (organic, esoteric)

Each domain will act according to its own law and form

Form of each domain and reifications will be conceptually derived - form from applicable source (see "non-musical form")

"The module needs to assert a task at the outset", but can change whenever necessary (supersession, turning point, etc.)

(this concerns only/primarily the linear presentation of NS variation sets)

Engenders the qualities of questioning, irony, wit and subversion - a transfiguration of humor/wit ("humor in the widest possible sense")

Simultaneous variations: possible through layering, multiverse, pan-field/surround

Silent variation (multiple uses?)

Turning points (var level, work level, POTU level) Singular event

Programmatically governed sequence for variations, if not spatially organized Convergence phase?

Supersession defeats inductive reasoning because it reveals an outer-context that was unable to be seen from/in the previous condition

VARIATION FORM

From 2008:

"The form of the whole - and the form of each module - will now resemble a suite, of either similar or disparate events, that will reflect the spirit of variation form, musical material or not. Holding onto 'variation form' without the developmental/motivic aspect (without material to be varied) is tenuous - thus we move on to philosophical forms like "treatise" or axioms/proofs, narrative illustrations, etc. - possibly dramatically converted from philosophical works (and seminal works from other disciplines).

Each module - as in philosophy - will have an overarching aim/thesis/topic, and the objects will illustrate facets of the initial topic. Each object relates to the grand issue (here we see the similarity with variation form - that each variation approaches the material differently). The music will also address the state of not knowing, skepticism, agnosticism, mystery and ambiguity - "what one can't speak of". Most profound questions do not have an answer, or have many answers. The music must exploit this - it must not pretend to know. Reifications allow the composer to show an action in progress rather than speak of it - the 'nature of the topic' in a certain instance."

Domain and its reifications = “conceptual variation” form - what is varied is *not* material, but an idea, principle or concept

Different levels of obviousness

Physical, psychological, literal, obscure, time-based, minimalist, complex, reverse/contrary

Also: pivot one variation off of the former (rather than an initial material) (like an argument)

New Style: multiple representations of a concept = related to ‘long-generation’ ideas - the variation set/suite as a meeting place for hallowed ideas, some dating back to the start of civilization. Also related to “periphery” - objects/events/people/ideas *related* to the central concept.

Personal concepts vs. true scientific objectivity/investigation

Then “cast” the experiments in timbres?

Must be musically meaningful (as opposed to some granular synthesis etc.)

“How to programmatically represent death isn’t a ‘soft’ problem - it can be approached in research...so it may not, in the end, be about any specific style, but more of a Picasso/Stockhausen orientation.”

“Unknowing” as central

Allows consideration like a philosopher - intellectual questioning

Not “music” but philosophy (musical concerns are secondary)

Mature style as not committing to one conclusion: like variation form, showing many options - open-ended works, etc.

Not finishing any works that remain unsolved (not imposing a solution on them) (late style)

“Hypotheses” as works - calling them this semantically reinforces the Socratic centrality of unknowing
experimental or just open-ended? (i.e. you must take ownership, or not? (objectivity?))
never leave the experimentation phase?

Bach as a reconciliation of using many different styles in the system

Summarizing all that came before, but reconciling it within a coherent system.

Threat of being piecemeal if the entire language doesn’t have a single method

“Glisten, glimmer, and question you - metaphysically”

“Variation form is of supreme importance. It allows autonomy of each object (each variation), while subverting or confirming it with

Those before and after. It gives all aesthetic points of view a voice, as they have in life - a dialogue between variations. Yet

Certain variations can “win out” in the convergence phase, which functions like a philosophical treatise.

Many answers to the same question - b/c the question itself is so ambiguous

Denying the foolish, reductionist idea of “one answer”

The outer shell and fundamental assumptions of the new style are different - it’s more post-modern than modern, but ultimately Socratic.

It’s not assertive as much as it breaks down and analyzes modes of being, perspective, argument and their interaction.

Confronting real-world issues (political aspect to the style)

Trumps conventional arguments from barrier arguments all the way to the alternate reality

Supersession is a way of showing how narrow-minded most beliefs are - even those thought to be radical

Similarly, certain aesthetics (Belle Epoque, maj7, etc.) will be deconstructed and radicalized into much more challenging,

Exaggerated aesthetics - and ambiguified in the process (veiling, pan-field/collage, development, axiom, etc.)

to reveal the true complexity behind most things

Even objects that are deceptively simple (Octave Tower) have complex processes going on in them

Vibration clashes = micro-polyrhythm

Adding higher frequencies = higher organization of energy

Possibly through layering, several human-style processes could be going on in its shadow

Denial of control = a fundamental element of “unknowledge” - the illusion that humans know everything

The implication of unknowing on variation form is that it must break down at some point - esp. if humanity is introduced

Starting with a motif and gradually deconstructing it until you reach a highly abstract H700 object

The “unknowing” has dissolved the variation form’s barriers, resulting in a higher complexity

What the above implies is a composition loosely based on variation form, but “bursting at the seams” - constantly subverting and superseding itself = the complex system. Even the rules begin to change - (turning points and more subtly), which is something new in the world of composition, where “order” is controlled. It erodes the composer’s ‘need for control’.

fundamental uncertainty at the base of the universe = indeterminacy, aleatory?

I have a responsibility to include this

“It doesn’t just address change, it’s militantly about change - the ambiguity of life, and the absurdity of clinging to things of the past, whether it be ideology or people/place - it’s a metaphoric way to resist death and other traditional barriers”

Supersession defeats inductive reasoning (because it reveals an outer-context that was unable to be seen from/in the previous condition)

the listener is tempted into inductive reasoning, assuming that the current state will remain consistent (or that it is supreme)

inductive reasoning is defeated b/c of an inability to be sure about *all* cases or contexts

Many have rejected metaphysics and its satellites entirely:

If we take in our hand any volume; of divinity or school metaphysics, for instance; let us ask, *Does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity or number?* No. *Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence?* No. Commit it then to the flames: for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion.

— David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*

More breadth of emotion, more depth of feeling

Thinking composition, direct exhibition of composer’s thought process counterintuition

highly articulated

juxtaposition of original material with its more advanced, development-based incarnations

Variation form is ideal, because every time you say about a composition "...but that can't be *it*" (i.e. all there is), it is automatically subsumed into something much bigger. Especially for songs, beats, and other small works. A song has a significant role as a human variation in an objective universe.

A transfiguration of humor and wit (Diabelli - "humor in the widest possible sense")

Explicit pedagogical intent? (Bach, etc.)

A way to learn music faster (b/c of all the different variation contexts)

Able to balance itself - the sparseness or simplicity of one variation is balanced by the insane complexity of the next (ensures that each is appreciated, and not misunderstood as "new age" (chord mass axioms), or lacking poetry (the complex) or too sensual, etc. (subverted like Taxi Driver), too pop (beats that gradually become art/classical)

Actually frees the set to be more radical

Full spectrum" - you need the conventional in order to smash it, superseding countless times before the work is over

Also: the var form could start ordered and divided in order to introduce the mature concept of metamorphosis later

Variation form in its old sense, with progressive radicalization... motif could be a factor in the early variations

Yet - if you are denying simplicity and knowledge, then how can you impose artificial barriers between variations, or even insist there is such a thing as "objective reification", esp. of human-style? Through tone-editing, perhaps each can "bleed" through the highly-segmented variation form construct. Still, has variation form already been superseded in the modern era by "metamorphoses" within an organic environment, even by developing variation?

So what does that say about Beethoven's Diabelli Variations?

A scientific 'isolation' of worlds, methods of thought, styles, archetypes? (etc.)

The implication of unknowing on variation form is that it must break down at some point - esp. if humanity is introduced

Theories of entropy/negentropy? Order/chaos, etc. = must study how complex systems operate

You begin the variation set with the knowledge that the 'object autonomy' cannot hold

Also: artificial division when a "pure archetype" is reached - like an octave tower, to display 'perfection' autonomously or arriving in an entire world that is only purely divided archetypes

2001 stargate sequence, for instance

Alternate worlds w/ different laws (that are (and thus should sound) foreign to the listener)

Finally, "beyond problem context" displays musical object with *no change?* (no complication, tension etc.)

The "philosophical world" or "thought space" (dividing comprehensive philo by them) is where different sets of rules are derived.

Also: the track dividers in variation form can separate a continuous movement (track number changes but music keeps going) (new track name, etc.)

What the above implies is a composition loosely based on variation form, but "*bursting at the seams*" - constantly subverting and superseding itself = the complex system. Even the rules begin to change - (turning points and more subtly), which is something new in the world of composition, where "order" is controlled. It erodes the composer's 'need for control'.

vs. indeterminacy: This is still much more conceptual than micro-level indeterminacy, as the unpredictability and subversion is still able to be explained programmatically by the composer, and rather than notes, conceptual/symbolic "blocks" are manipulated, allowing for more semantic content. This is the philosophy-in-music part.

THE FORM:

Form: Variation form consistent with the following ideas:

Variation form emphasis

Dictated by a concept, not material (“reification sets”) psychological variation

Full spectrum: each variation has full spectrum of musical aspects at its disposal

Custom ideas about variation form (that lend nuance and profundity to the discipline/genre)

“All possible changes inherent in its own being” - Barenboim

Time barrier: music exists in time - the nature and peculiarities of time (see *time scales*, suspense etc.)

But also spatial

“Breaking the barrier of time”? - spatial organization transcends limitation

Open-Ended:

Variations/Refractions of finished large-scale works into larger works (i.e. variations of Opus 1, etc.) = endless

Reification - form dictated by what is to be reified

Generative music

“Evolving” music

Developing variation with “choice”/survival aspect (conditions of current moment determine next moment)

Long-term processes

Not returning, instead “becoming” (rejects classicism’s return/full circle ideas of resolution)

Supersession: form can be extended indefinitely

Micro and macro scales, versus the “middle world” of normal composition

Totalizing/anthological

Joycean:

Moments are amplified through subsequent tasks, expanding a moment/object

(esp. fruitful in variation form, where the original is present)

Form tasks (Wozzeck, etc.) - reconciles with variation form

Comprehensive Ambition:

The difference between a comprehensive, highest-level genius (Shakespeare, Michelangelo, Bach, Beethoven) and niche-artists

The comprehensive/anthological ambition, which variation form facilitates

The desire to go beyond your own time to universals

Be uncompromising in refracting everything through *your mind*

It is not enough to lend “full commitment” to a random object (like wedges or single lines/drones) - those artists are weak.

(must be contextualized - balanced/juxtaposed against other ideas/styles/modes of thought)

Scalability in Variation:

Even without the “lifetime work” aspect, the new style, esp. coupled with the variation orientation, is able to provide an artistic world large enough for expansion over a lifetime - scalability.

“**Scalability** is a desirable property of a system, a network, or a process, which indicates its ability to either handle growing amounts of work in a graceful manner or to be enlarged. For example, it can refer to the capability of a system to increase total throughput under an increased load when resources (typically hardware) are added. An analogous meaning is implied when the word is used in a commercial context, where scalability of a company implies that the underlying business model offers the potential for economic growth within the company.”

DIVISION:

On modular division in variation form:

“The overall suite form: will be sectional/divided by silence and more tangibly, “*track divisions*” (to differentiate from in-section pauses).

Alternatives:

Doesn’t have to be episodic (there are many false assumptions about variation form)

Won’t be modular (each variation “bleeds” into the next) - and how can you truly say one variation isn’t related?

Could be psychological variation, or intangibly related, philosophically related.

Overlapping variations:

Obstinate variations, who refuse to stop when they’re supposed to

“Echoes” of previous variation

The inability to deny/wash away history

See: tone-editing

The “unknowing” has dissolved the variation form’s barriers, resulting in a higher complexity

What the above implies is a composition loosely based on variation form, but “*bursting at the seams*” - constantly subverting and superseding itself = the complex system

VARIATION TASKS:

Predetermined, often mandatory prescriptions/orientations (“tasks”) for varying the initial material in variation form, designed to make systematic (to a greater certain degree) the variation process of an New Style object by referring to a pre-made list of “approaches”, “strategies” or “perspectives”. For example, a ‘humor-variation’ category with “parody” as an option under it, or the “objective modifications” list, which is an almost anthological list of transformations. In generalization, it amounts to “all possible or applicable approaches”.

Predetermined Tasks as “universal variation form” - fixed tasks, or fixed task-sequence

But very open-ended within the task.

Make each variation a movement in its own right (works will be hours long)

With the subject material and/or reification topic (extramusical/psychological) as pivot?

Each task named (as in Queneau)

See: poetic conversion (ways a “grand subject” can be represented)

See: point/argument, barrier arguments, worldview

variations are “points of view”, so variations can be gleaned from any assertive position

(philo, science, politics, human action, art strategies, culture)

See: science notes, objective principles - ways forces act

Appropriation objects as task for variation (see Full Object List)

whole work-forms as tasks? (opera as variation X - or opera scene, etc.)

whole work parodies (like parody of “Marriage of Figaro” as variation III?)

“Personal” aspect to variation form: what type of interactions do *you* want to see done?

Variation form is still ‘directed’ (i.e. personal and not objective) b/c ‘implications’ of initial material are subjective.

Each work is a series of hundreds of “possibilities” and views on initial material - will contain different ways of looking at the material

Purely intellectual

Extramusical work

“Contexts”: assigning symbol interaction

Song

Objective development in different orders

Axioms

Emotional counterpoint

Refractions – counterintuition/wit etc.

Different work archetypes and tributes

Different scales: intimate, personal, universal

Different form sequences

A personal movement (philosopher’s own belief? - subjectivity)

A microcosm variation set (different axioms?)

A humor context wit movement (or parody, counterintuition)

A universal transfiguration (logical conclusion of material in metaphysical sense) -

From its “moral implication”, its application in life - toward degeneration, evolution, perfection etc.

(then superseded by “beyond problem context”??)

A “new language”?

“Full” variation form:

Skits, opera, dramatic dialogue, song, academic/abstract ideas (embedded, etc.),

Less sectional, or explicitly sectional

Progressively more abstract/less “human” more complex

+ Ironic returns to simplicity

Some variations would put subject in much larger context

As a climax

As an infamous moment

As a lull event

A phrase

An ironic moment

Controversial variations:

Silent variation: for all those who know the subject more closely/personally, for “knowledge”

silence variation

measured silence variation (as long as initial material?)

Omission variation: first note/chord, silence, then ending note/chord

Time-uniqueness variation (literal repetition, insisting on “new time” as the means of variation)

One-note change variation (change one note)

Transposition variation

Backwards variation

Microcosm (shrunken to microtime scale)

Proportionally: shrunken in both length and height/range

Active panning variation (or use it in all?)

fast interplay between L&R

will be a refraction stage, to utilize the potential of pan fields

Drum variation (tapping out the rhythm to the initial material, possibly w/ embellishments)

Drum pattern variations

Staggered material in different panning lanes (canonic, and panned into lanes, possibly transposed)

Extreme pointillism (each note, etc. - each note with different instrument (100's of inst's?))

Unplayable complexity variation

Irony: use a *very small* object to represent a typically huge, imposing and/or totalizing concept (delicate, microsound, etc.)

Variation sets as a subject module object: "variations of variations"

variation works within variation works: microcosm

a variation set as one of the objects in the subject module

i.e. Var. IX is chord-based, then a smaller set of variations taking the progression through axioms, like Feldman

developing variation of each variation?

Axiom exhibition: refracting a chord progression through different axioms

Feldman variations: always start on same chord?

Initial Motif variations:

See: developing variation

Variation ordered by what part of the initial material is to be varied (i.e. "rhythm" variations, "harmonic" variations, etc.)

How many motifs can an initial motif spawn?

Displaying the initial subject creates a "touchstone", then allowing the listener to see the radicality of the composer's mind (Diabelli)

Make initial subject deliberately pedestrian? (yet pregnant with meaning?)

Variations within the form of the original: if the original subject is eventful (should be) then each variation can do its take on the event

Diabelli: dark ostinato, cadences, ornamented start of melody, b-part (repeated twice), etc.

Themes for each variation derived from the initial material - the initial material is implicit

Instead of having one theme for the work, you have a "parent theme"

Intro with a completely objective statement played on piano

The introduction as reduction of the chosen material? (its intervals, chord prog, etc?)

"Building blocks", pre-material (the material of the material)

The original material dictates the types of harmonies to be used (the families) and what constitutes subversion and purification

Objective development matrix unfolding (including basics > radicalism/extreme gesture > multiple generations > refractions)

Analysis/ "truth content"/intellectual side:

The conceptual "problem" posed by the music itself (and how the concept organizes everything else under it)

Pedagogical/experimental element The work's thesis Paradox, conceptual metaphor, "rules of the game"

The work's basic assumptions – the logic of the language as governed by concept (determines criteria/method of analysis)

Art as pure thought/cognition/thought process

Total connectivity: "the whole" (and subjugating the parts to build to it)

The "why": accountability, reconciliation (explaining the necessity for the reason of any compositional decision)

Form-event causality – why any event (individual moment, part) is a result of the previous (or how it relates)

"Musical sense" of any element

How their cohesion, conflict etc. move toward the whole

Basic material and its reoccurrence for a reason Fulfilled roles of the material by the end

Note-note significance (microcosm)

Plot:

Programmatic forms (created, organic/dramatic forms) – thesis form, dream form, sonata, variations etc.

the intellectual justification for sequencing in this way

Turning point, point of clarity, point of distillation, point of nakedness etc.

Becoming, symbolic transformation

Refraction to consistency "Technical consistency"

"Trains of thought" that run through the work (following them)

Universal transfiguration: the conclusion of the work, based on universal philosophical *implications* (musical and extramusical)

Criticism of the work

Using set theory: exhibit the method in the work - expose the sets at the beginning, divide with silence, etc.

Exposure of "specimen" for the development process (in isolation)

Initial tone-row, then later the chords derived from it, then later the objects (once the chords are combined w/ axiom)

Variation set advantages = the division, the pedagogical aspect, the isolation of variables, the progression

Quantum is "all paths", so it's not disordered as *comprehensive* = developing variation, especially implying "all paths"

“Dream” variation: conceptual dreamscape, of flashing images and archetypes/symbols

Fusion of emotion and intellectualism through flashing emergences of either

Dual/multiple “strands” of thought that can be followed?

Several trains of thought that emerge and recede (Carter)

Play with distance and spacing

Distance: background/foreground

Distance inversion (one train of thought recedes, one moves forward)

Spacing: trains of thought on left or right side

Which train of thought wins out?

Human presence variation: Joycean literary/dramatic appropriation forms

Entrance of a symbolic character (think 9th Symphony, Speak To Me, player in Pippin, historical figure)

Vocal collage

Whole work-forms (opera as variation X - or opera scene, etc.)

Whole work parodies (like parody of “Marriage of Figaro” as variation III)

Through tone editing, anything that appears in a human variation will enter the surrounding.

Ostentatious ideas on human variations themselves - crazy ways to integrate them

variations by character/emotion task

On integrating lyrics/text into a var set

Abstractly: sampling lyrics, including an audio snippet

Otherwise, make it the nature of the whole set - using human voice as orchestration (Berio but a whole symphony)

and make the approach like Joyce+Sinfonia+all axioms (i.e. not just busy and wild, but sparse/epic or micro as well)

“Drama frame” Joycean var set (Opus 1) with zooms, generalizations, digressions, stylistic exercises etc.

Having a “live presence” on a var set is different - immediately screams “music drama”

Could be arrival of a “character” as an infamous moment - arrival of humans, like 9th symphony

Mini-oratorio

VARIATION PROCESS

Specifically for “new style” variation form
vs. the “Joycean drama” of Opus 1

On a universal concept (“grand subject” variation module within the overall ‘portrait of the universe’) there should be no problem in developing it out to multiple conceptual variations. Interesting, conflicting, superseding ideas.
you already have acknowledged different ways of looking at something - and *ways of thought* that supersede each other.

New Style process steps

There are multiple processes possible at certain levels (like how to derive an H700 object)

All H700 ideas/sketches should all funnel into one place (ostentatious ideas, sketches, Aesthetics, artist strategies, barriers)

The H700 objects could be derived from various sources then reappropriated/reconsidered

For instance, derive from artwork analogues (Rothko, Malevich, etc.), then consider the objects freshly/objectively.

Next, integrate them into a system (like calling the horizon objects “romantic or sensual beauty in the world” or another poetic,

Mann-like philosophical idea (nostalgia of a past utopia, the romantic solitude of the artist, flicker of the individual etc.)

Simply the fact of so many contributing influences to the H700 objects hints at a portrait of the universe (gems/minerals, space, philosophical barriers, the nature of art, human thought, eroticism, horizons/light, birth/death, abstract art, objective parameters)

“How to programmatically represent death isn’t a ‘soft’ problem - it can be approached in research...so it may not, in the end, be about any specific style, but more of a Picasso/Stockhausen orientation.”

0. Choice of topic (“grand subject”)

“Programmatic ideas” list

1. Research/philosophy (non musical research)

Write a philosophy on the subject

You should end up with one, as a product of the research

Allow your overall philosophy to creep in

The perspectives at the beginning will probably be the less radical (but still interesting)

Will result in programmatic description for each variation

Compile other the ideas of other philosophers

What are the disciplines that touch on this?

Artists: what have artists done (esp. conceptually - see “artist solutions”)

Film, literature: scenes, scenarios, plots

Psychology

etc.

> Save each module in a separate document

Modules: only talk about things you find fundamental, universal or particularly important

> Sources for research:

Everywhere - books, research articles, dissertations, net/wiki

subject list:

art, film, literature, philo, psych, religion, math, physics/astronomy, biology etc. etc.

architecture, politics, *history*, etc.

> Format

See ideas document, others - ways to express ideas, conceptual realization strategies

for instance, showing the opposite (in the death vars, talk about birth, life, vitality and immortality)

the infinite

implies that even in the module, it “bursts at the seams” and transcends its own subject

plus the holistic form could be negation or transcendence of the subject

(see dramatic conversion in var set compilation)

Idea document, Idea Web - how to expose an idea

Periphery: once idea is exposed, there will be periphery - you’ll need to evaluate and plan if/how to include

Predeterminism:

Variation tasks (predetermined list in “variation form ideas” doc)

Ostentatious ideas (predetermined list in “ideas for works” doc) - see if any apply

Leave the most ostentatious for the thesis phase?

Objects to reify

Works folder itself

I.O. “sweeps” - go through the entirety of I.O. and brainstorm against grand and scene concepts

To make sure you aren’t missing anything

Will probably do many in the course of the work

“The issue will become: how to expand a “grand subject” into many variations”

2. Develop objects based on the research (reification)

Where do they fall in the radicality spectrum?

You will probably have several different ways to represent each concept as well - create more than will be included

Also, you may have conceptualized musical objects already - directly from the research

Mostly programmatic description and sketches

Analogues with the *independent* new style objects and ideas (i.e. the purely musical discoveries - how can you utilize them?)

3. Realize objects (optional)

Using all musical tools at your disposal - each object must be a masterpiece in itself

Each variation will be like a work in itself, essentially self contained (at the lowest level of thought)

> Approach/method may be different for each object (sub-processes for each variation)

The full processes outlined in other parts of I.O. (segmented folders, etc.)

All 'traditional' processes: see "Process I, II and III" doc

Segmented folders, within the main "grand subject" folder

Reification process - to reify the scene - see representation notes

Refraction through lists (esp. extreme/barrier lists, and "must-haves" of the style - pans, veiling etc.)

Exhaustive ambition (+ limits)

I.O. "sweep" 2 especially "radical ideas toplist"

Rough drafts, experiments, different axioms, scales, orchestration mediums

3. Write an exploration of their possible interaction

Programmatic description of the sequence: why the order progresses the way it does - supersession, symbolism etc

Designate turning points, supersessions, dramatic form (holistic)

Which variations dictate the *tone-editing*?

and what effect that would have on the whole

Which will contain the foreshadowings and echoes?

and why would the previous/impending variation echo/foreshadow? (its power, omnipresence, insidiousness etc.)

Amount of heterogeneity, homogeneity

One variation may turn out to be the "greatest", and influence the others

Motif/musical idea: treating the variations as appropriation objects and developing a symbolic motif

(The motif is not necessary, but could be "entered into" variations and see the result)

4. Sequencing and tone editing

Track division

Re-orchestration

Refraction

Ordering the variations, after each has been created

Tone-editing the variations

5. convergence/"thesis" phase (optional?) - not necessarily a return, but a birth/conclusion/product of implications

research the variations and their implications (similar to 3 - interaction)

leave the most ostentatious for the thesis phase?

for each module?

6. Long-term

You have your entire lifetime to do it, so it's not infeasible to have 1000's of objects.

Revising it/adding to each var module then rethinking the sequencing (think Boulez)

Standardized nomenclature

The task now is:

To use the idea web technique and lists of prompts to develop a subject to its most powerful and unique manifestations

Development process for a subject, over multiple steps and documents

Idea development portal

VARIATION FORM BENCHMARKS

Benchmarks for variation form

Beethoven: Diabelli Variations (and 60+ sets over his output)
 Joyce: Ulysses
 Erasmus: Abundant Style and Queneau/French modern version
 gems and minerals at Smithsonian
 Picasso: "Picasso shatters the idea of style" - each work is an experiment, his subject matter is the constant
 Newman "Stations of the Cross" (exposition of a subject language)
 Berg: Wozzeck
 Mozart's variation sets

Beethoven: Diabelli Variations

Diabelli Variations are essentially a microcosm of Beethoven's development techniques

Variations: More breadth of emotion, more depth of feeling

Thinking composition, direct exhibition of composer's thought process counterintuition

Highly articulated variation form

Juxtaposition of original material with its more advanced, development-based incarnations

Here, it appears that most variations are too subtle to be named outright - they are better *described*

0. Subject (40 secs): simple, obvious, block chords, less subtle dynamics (blocky), conventional cadences, predictable, no chromatics
 square, simple binary form
 waltz meter
1. "Grand March" (1 min 30 secs): very similar to subject, actually (maintains harmonic language) - insistent on axiom pattern
 at end, some dynamic dialectic more powerful, grand
 "mock heroic" 4/4 meter
2. "Fast, Hushed" (1 min): unique axiom, embedded pattern (complexity), more dissonant/ambiguous harmonies, delicacy, some imitation
 piano dynamic fast alternating hands
3. "Beauty With Repeated Dark Figure" (1 min 20 secs): delicate/Mozartean > ambiguous wandering right after (chromatic, but still clear phrases)
 imitation, odd repeated ostinato (counterintuition) (B part) delicate chromaticism encasing a Mozartean subject
 open cadence (left hanging) originally planned as the 1st variation
4. "Builds to Climax" (1 min): imitation, treble constant 8th line, big cadences (climactic) place w/ ostinato is now a dark countermelody
 phrase relay/imitation between hands "landler?"
 closed cadence
5. "Stuttering Virtuosity" (50 secs): imitation between hands (similar to 5th symph aggregation, and motif style is similar too)
 rhythmic pattern modified by harmony - then put into imitation between hands first truly virtuosic variation
 minor start to B part
 small "Danse Infernale" aggregation at end (to cadence)
6. "Trill Strettos With Action" (1 min 47 secs): similar to Hammerklavier fugue - rhythmic tension of imitation "trill rhetorics"
 bass action w/ treble ornaments, *and vice-versa* fast action interplay between hands deep bass in left
 virtuosic variation delicate cadence at end, treble action, relatively high range (versus bass earlier)
7. "Triplets Against Bass Octaves" (1 min 10 secs): treble action against bass octaves sinister sound
 consistent axiom (rather than dialectic) - hands always play same role many strings of 16th triplets in tremble
8. "Delicacy Against Rising Bass" (1 min 14 secs): harmonic variation (similar vocab to Var 3)
 ascending, deep bass against treble chords (chorded, like string leading)
 counterintuitive melodic end to cadence (a small tag on the end) bass action: 170 bpm 1/2 notes (in 4/2) (16ths normally)
 b-part: ascending directionality
 "Plateau 1" (place of rest) (suggested by Solomon)
9. "Grace Note Figure, Upward Directionality Imitation" (1 min 44 secs): strictly axiomatic, regular imitation modified by harmony
 rhythmic cadence grace note figure = a "turn"
 b-part: ascending directionality, delicate cadence, fixed left w/ ascending right (echoes of ostinato)
10. "Presto Virtuoso" (38 secs): Vivaldi-like wedge virtuosic variation
 b-part: chordal inversions (3rds/6ths) over bass trill (in both directionalities)
11. "Delicate Ornament Interplay" (53 secs): delicate (higher range, less bass) version of earlier ornamented imitative passages (9, 3, 6)
 held notes after ornament = string-like voice leading some appoggiatura dissonance (#5)

12. "Range Ascents Versus Thundering Bass" (47 secs): a-part: third-doubled lines in treble, no bass > organic section w/ light bass (ascending)
b-part: tremolo bass (the dark ostinato) vs. treble ascents (dialectic) - bass ascends with treble use of dims in dark part
13. "Witty Dynamic Juxtapositions" (1 min): modular fortes, followed by aggregation to cadence (like 5th symph)
playing with high/low range on piano like development of Var 1 b-part: similar, but dev of high range part
does it have to be "witty"? is it serious?
14. "Solemn Chordal Voice Leading Build" (3 min 28 secs): chords in left, ornament and imitation in right minor key
directionality: mostly downward, then mostly upward (to climax points at end) microcosm of Beethoven adagios?
follows same rhythmic pattern throughout
"Plateau 2" (place of rest) (suggested by Solomon)
15. "Staccato and Hesitation" (33 secs): dialectic between staccato rhythm and longer note ascent (also between loud/soft)
counterintuitive cadence - momentarily disorienting (incoherence theory)
allowed such remote harmonies b/c it follows the original contour so closely
16. "Walking Bass And Trills" (1 min): trill as ornament in treble, over walking octave-staggered bass, then more complex bridge to repeat
bridge: looks like a sequence (use of dims, circle of 5ths)
b-part: descending walking bass, over trills/chords in right
no pause after this variation
17. "Fast March Descending Scales" (1 min): seamlessly follows the previous - descending scales, march rhythm in octave bass, bridge to repeat
b-part: more static arpeggios over octave/pedal bass (same rhythm) heavy octave bass
brings 1st half of work to close? ("invisible" sections?)
18. "Delicate Question/Answer" (1 min 12 secs): bridge is octave doubled ascending melody (no accompaniment)
on b-part bridge reinterpretation, he soon breaks the octave doubling (the top/bottom voices become independent)
subtle velocities (only small bass breakout in bridge)
19. "Fast Descent And Ascents" (1 min): chord arps, descending, staggered in imitation ascending bridge (as usual) with similar idea
b-part: direction reversal of chord arps (ascending), bridge reinterpretation ascends higher than usual
canonic
20. "Low Register Stillness" (1 min 50 secs): solo bass beginning, then strictly chorded, low velocity, subtle upward directionality
mostly 4 or 5 voices (sometimes 2) dims, minors, 7ths, majors
"Plateau 3" (place of rest) (suggested by Solomon) suggestive of organ?
21. "Ornaments And Bass Pulse Versus Subtlety" (1 min 10 secs): Waldstein-like descending ornaments (over 4 oct) over pulsing low chords
delicate contrary motion bridge (h/c) (higher register, lower dynamics, ascending)
b-part: treble and bass reversal
22. "After Don Giovanni" (47 secs): octaves in both hands then a small gliss, in the same rhythmic pattern as Don Giovanni (literal quote at start?)
(Leoporello's intro aria)
b-part: subtle reinterpretation (lower dynamics) then ugly aggregation - "forcing through"
saturation/exaggeration of the gliss - put in bass
23. "Stabs And Action (Finger Exercise Parody)" (52 secs): stabs then fast action scales in contrary motion (16ths at high tempo - 160 bpm)
bridge: ascending interlocking fast action over bass (in octaves) descending
b-part: subtle reharmonization and treble/bass switch (fast chords in right, octaves still in left)
24. "Fughetta After Bach" (1 min 55 secs): a-part created by fugal imitation (and intact tonally) bridge is the episode?
b-part: counterpoint, from an inversion of subject like certain passages of Missa Solemnis
odd cadence (Fm to C)
25. "German Dance, Bass Accompaniment" (52 secs): waltz, octave-spread chords in right, with fast bass action under
b-part: larger scale version of same axiom (ascends longer, more ambiguous chords)
"caricature variation"
26. "Descents and Ascents 2" (1 min): like Var 19, playing with directionality (over 5 octave spread) bridge like Var 12, third-doubled lines
imitative b-part: sharper runs upward (reversed directionality) bridge reinterpreted an octave higher
cadence descends sharply
27. "Stabs And Action 2 - Left/Right Hand 16ths" (1 min): like Var 23 - except more rhythmic support
bridge: faster, more complex - expanding contrary motion
b-part: reversal of direction (ascending), longer bridge (action is in triplets)
28. "Chordal Dissonance" (51 secs): forcing through dissonance w/ rhythm (majors, interspersed dim's) - wide voicing, contrary/oblique motion
consistent axiom in a-part (gets wider for bridge, ascends)

b-part: continuation of a-part axiom, into imitation of rhythmic pattern, ascending
turning point: violence, yielding to the larger sections to come (of a more profound nature)

29. "Adagio In Minor" (1 min 15 secs): similar to Var 20, but faster and with brighter ornaments minors, 7ths and dim's
30. "Baroque Lament - Minor" (2 min 10 secs): constant rhythm of movement, contrapuntal precursor to Romanticism?
imitation in a-part b-part: quick flash of dark ostinato, imitated by treble C minor
31. "Ornate Aria, Bach Adagio - Minor" (4 min 41 secs): use of ornamentation (trills, runs, 32/64th notes etc.) - with chords in left
occasional runs in bass improvisational feeling C minor
half cadence at end (left open) "foreshortening of Diabelli's theme"
32. "Triple Fugue, Glissando - Minor" (2 min 48 secs): new key (in otherwise c-rooted work) Eb major
subject 1: repeating figure (from the repeating chords in initial subject?) based on interval in initial material, not structure
 ruthless and idiosyncratic, like Hammerklavier fugue
subject 2: slower theme
"wonderful variety of harmonies, contexts, lights and shades, as well as using the traditional fugal techniques of inversion and stretto."
subject 3: 16th notes at fast tempo
glissando as cadenza: as breaking point of subject 2's speed
post-glissando stillness: high-register chords with octave bass (piano) - modulatory "otherworldly" "time stands still"
33. "Minuet, Quiet Resolution" (4 min): pleasant a-part (Diabelli's waltz, reimagined) quiet end = balance, like Goldberg
 bridge: wide-voices ascent, and arpeggiated sharp descent as h/c (hurrying)
b-part: sparse, patient
c-part: pedal bass, escalation, sharp ascent (still delicate)
 complex cadenza (echoing previous variation?) - very delicate section (high range, rhythm/feel like Var 2)
 all descending, sectionally
end: descending bass part
 deceptive, delicate ascent.... (reversal of hurrying descent from a-part?)
single forte chord end: delicacy vs. force (microcosm of the work?)

Beethoven's approach to the theme is to take some of its smallest elements - the opening turn, the descending fourth and fifth, the repeated notes - and build upon them pieces of great imagination, power and subtlety. Alfred Brendel wrote, "The theme has ceased to reign over its unruly offspring. Rather, the variations decide what the theme may have to offer them. Instead of being confirmed, adorned and glorified, it is improved, parodied, ridiculed, disclaimed, transfigured, mourned, stamped out and finally uplifted."

Numerical symbolism (33 variations, the number of each variation could have significance)

Part II of Diabelli: all other composers, incl. Schubert, Czerny, Franz Liszt (at 7), Hummel, Moscheles, Kalkbrenner

Beethoven called them "*transformations*" not "variations"

"A journey from the everyday world ("Diabelli's theme conveys ideas, not only of the national, the commonplace, the humble, the rustic, the comic, but of the mother tongue, the earthly, the sensuous, and, ultimately, perhaps, of every waltzing couple under the sun" to a transcendent reality."

"Parody is the key to the work" - Kinderman

"The affect (character) of the original theme is left far behind"

"The purpose of the new variations is to recall Diabelli's waltz in order to keep the cycle from spiraling too far away from its original theme.

Without such a device, considering the great variety and complexity of the set, Diabelli's waltz would become superfluous, "a mere prologue to the whole."

Did Beethoven insert these to "tame" his previous incarnation?

"A humorous work in the widest possible sense"

"Analytical profundity"

Variation in Berg's Wozzeck:

Berg met his requirements not only through these more or less old forms, but created forms based upon new principles, such for example as those resting on a foundation of one "tone," one "rhythm," one "chord," etc "desire for musical variety" (vs. "through composition")

Act 1 Scene 4: Passacaglia (visit to the physician)

Variations dictated by dramatic action (sort of like an appropriation object)

21 variations

Deliberate gradation of intensity

Theme emerges with greater clarity, when physician fully states his aims

Act 3 Scene 1: Inventions on a Theme

The severity of the architecture (an expression intentionally used by Berg in this connection) leads to the following construction: the two-part theme, consisting of antecedent and consequent, has seven bars; it recurs seven times in varied forms

Act 3 Scene 2: Inventions on Note B:

Berg: "The low B of the contrabasses, which was heard in the final chord of the fugue (also as the last tone of the important concluding cadence of the second act), now becomes the unifying factor, the coordinating principle of the murder scene. It appears here again in the greatest variety of ways, as an organ-point, as a stationary middle or upper voice, doubled in many octaves and heard in all conceivable registers and colors. Finally when the murder of Marie occurs to the fortissimo crescendo roll of the tympani, all her important musical motives are sounded in precipitate succession over this organ point of B—as in the moment of death all the important occurrences of life are believed to pass rapidly and in distortion before the mind of the dying person: the cradle-song of her first scene, reminiscences of the jewel scene in the second act, even of the Drum-Major, of the lament on her misery which finally melts into the motive in fifths, the theme of her vain waiting.

The brief transformation music brings this underlying B forward once more. This time it is employed as a unison, the only note of the entire scale, present in almost all the instruments of the full orchestra, beginning with the softest imaginable, the muted horn, and finally evolving to its highest powers through the entrance, one after the other, of each member of the ensemble, except the percussion. It is to be observed that these consecutive entrances do not occur at regular intervals, but follow a peculiar rhythmic principle. The entrances of the winds as well as those of the strings make distinct rhythms, interlocking in the form of a canon of a quarter-note shift. The apparent irregularity so created, of which the listener is, of course, as little aware as of the logical arrangement of the entrances, seems to breathe an exceptionally strong life into this crescendo tone. The fact is that this crescendo has a greater dynamic effect and intensity than its recurrence on B in various registers, with the addition of the entire percussion."

Problem: Why restrict a technique to one scene? (i.e. an evolution approach)

Because it may not be relevant to the object and content of scene (i.e. non-organic variations)

Because we are reifying from extramusical things, the approach may be different

...but tone-editing can smooth this somewhat

It could "contaminate" the variations around it