

Circular Variations

on "M. C. J. A. F. P."

for flute & mandolin

Peter McKenzie Armstrong

Opus 37

Edition Ottaviano Petrucci

NOTES

SUBJECT

This work has six themes, each derived from its corresponding portion of the six–element name below. Each theme’s pitch classes were specified by mapping its name–part’s characters to the musical alphabet loop,

M I C H A E L	C H R I S T I A N	J O H N	A R N O	F R A N C I S	P E S T E L
f b c a a e e	c a d b e f b a g	c a a g	a d g a	f d a g c b e	b e e f e e

leaving accidentals to be introduced via the music–generative process. Their octave registrations and initial durations were then intuitively set.

COMPOSITION

As in my *Variations on a Name*, the themes are varied by incremental axial rotation of their (X–time/Y=pitch) coordinates. The earlier work treated its multipart name as a single unit, with ensuing complications as its subnames intermingled. The present work instead rotates name parts separately, throwing into greater relief the underlying generation.

The axial rotation is anticlockwise in 15–deg increments (see opposite). There are 24 of these per movement, yielding as many bars of music.

0 15 30	Albeit incrementally realized, the rotation is
45 60 75	essentially continuous, evolving input toward
90 105 120	and from its retro–inversion at 180 degrees.
135 150 165	Throughout, the functions R and I act only
180 195 210	together as RI, never independently.
225 240 255	
270 285 300	Time signatures report the total of underlying
315 330 345	rhythmic units (invisible) per measure.

INSTRUMENTATION

The score is single–staffed with notehead colors flagging pattern details according to pitch relationships within the bar:

Black: unique
Green: repeating
Red: simultaneous

As rhythm is unmetered – indicating durations only via proportional horizontal space – coordinating three instruments will be prohibitive. I suggest optimally a Flute/Mandolin duo, with flute taking Black and mandolin taking Green and Red; alternatively the whole as a solo for either organ or piano.

PERFORMANCE

Accidentals: Each applies exactly once (a style Lilypond terms "forget").
Articulation: Default for unslurred notes is *detache* – not overly short but ending each note, including a slur’s last, before the next begins.
Repeated notes (green) are to be held until the next in their group.

Final bars: Each movement is to end with a repeat of its first measure.
Programming: As texture throughout the work is virtually consistent, I suggest that its movements be performed, not all together, but in a selection of one to three at players’ choice and ordering.

– PMA

Duration: ~5 min.

to Michael Pestel

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Michael

Sauntering (bar = 2 ticks at 46)

21 artic. ad. lib.

The musical score consists of eight staves of music in treble clef. The first staff begins with a measure number '21' and the instruction 'artic. ad. lib.'. The music is written in a key with one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The score includes various musical notations such as eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and slurs. Some notes are highlighted with red or green dots. There are also some accidentals (sharps and flats) and a 'b' symbol above a note in the second staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the eighth staff.

Christian

Lilting (bar = 2 ticks at 60)

artic. ad. lib.

The musical score consists of eight staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a 3/3 time signature, and the tempo marking 'Lilting (bar = 2 ticks at 60)'. The music is written in a key with one sharp (F#) and includes various rhythmic values, slurs, and articulation marks. The second staff includes the instruction 'artic. ad. lib.' above the first measure. The score uses a color-coding system: green dots for notes, red dots for accidentals, and black dots for stems and beams. Some notes have horizontal lines underneath them, possibly indicating fingerings. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the eighth staff.

John

Lackadaisical (bar = 2 ticks at 69)

Musical score for John's piece, titled "Lackadaisical (bar = 2 ticks at 69)". The score consists of eight staves of music in treble clef. The first staff begins with a treble clef and the number 15. The music features various notes, including accidentals (sharps and flats), and is annotated with green and red dots. Slurs are used to group notes across multiple staves. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Arno

Whimsical (bar = 48)

Musical score for Arno's piece, titled "Whimsical (bar = 48)". The score consists of eight staves of music in treble clef. The music features various notes, including accidentals (sharps and flats), and is annotated with green and red dots. Slurs are used to group notes across multiple staves. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Francis

Excited (bar = 52)

17
artic. ad. lib.

