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Theme and Variations for Solo Violin

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Theme and Variations takes its title from a musical form in which a self-contained theme is repeated and changed in some way with each successive variation. Historically, many composers have favored this form. A well-known example is Mozart’s Twelve Variations on “Ah, Vous Dirai-Je, Maman”, the song which we now refer to as Twinkle Twinkle Little Star.

My composition, though it is a theme with five variations, may not be easily recognized as such. The sections do not necessarily have clear melodic connections with one another; each rather develops into the next one. The theme is based on a MM7th chord. The first variation adds a major 3rd above it; the second variation expands the major 3rd to a perfect 4th; the next variations continue expanding the interval to a tritone, a perfect 5th and finally a minor 6th. Also, the ending figures of the theme and each variation have the same intervallic content. The macro structure of this composition is similar to an “arch” in its symmetry: the first and last variations are expressive and romantic; the second and fourth ones are light and airy; the third (central) variation is abstract yet playful. Moreover, the sound of the solo violin varies in different ways such as legatos, staccatos, pizzicatos, tremolos and flute-like harmonics. It is my hope that this composition will be an interesting “journey” of Theme and Variations.