

# THE YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA

## Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Purcell



WARREN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

By Benjamin Britten, 1913-1976

As you'll remember, this wonderful piece showed you each of the instruments of the orchestra and then put them all together. And it was made possible by the work of two famous English composers.

Way back in the 17th century, about 350 years ago, Henry Purcell [pron. PUR-sel] (1659-1695), wrote music for a stage play called "Abdelazar; or The Moor's Revenge." Almost 300 years later, Benjamin Britten was looking for a way to introduce all the instruments of the orchestra. He was a great admirer of Purcell's work and found a short piece from that play that would work beautifully. He decided to make a set of "variations" using Purcell's tune, or theme.



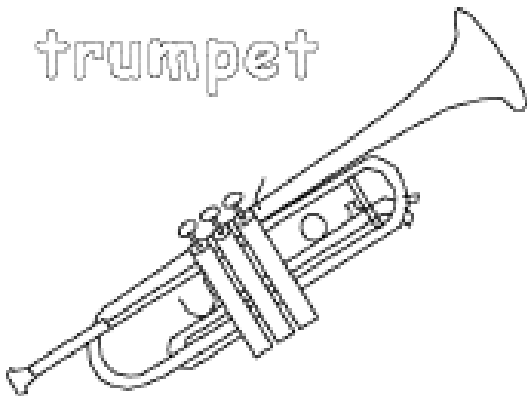
A musical set of variations is just what you might expect: the "theme" is played over and over, but each time it is changed in some clever way, so that there is always something new happening.

Each set is devoted to different instruments. The first four show off the four families of the orchestra: woodwinds, brass, strings, and percussion. After that, Britten devotes the next variations each to a different instrument: the flute, the oboe, the clarinet, and so on.

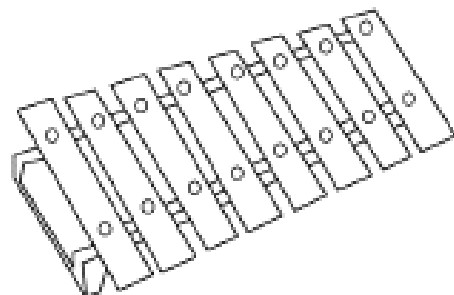
Finally, after he has introduced every single instrument of the orchestra, he brings them all together. Arranging music in this way is called a "fugue." Each instrument plays the Benjamin Britten fugue theme, entering one at a time. At the end, with the fugue still going on, the brass play Purcell's original tune.

Britten was not only trying to show young people...kids...all the instruments, but he was also flexing his musical muscles and showing everybody what a clever and skilled composer he was. Do you agree?

trumpet



xylophone



drum



**Answer these questions.** Refer to the previous story and place your answers on the blanks. Use the numbers to help decode the words below for more fun music facts.

1. What are the four families of the orchestra:

$\overline{10}$   $\overline{4}$   $\overline{4}$   $\overline{16}$   $\overline{10}$   $\overline{6}$   $\overline{8}$   $\overline{16}$   $\overline{5}$  '  $\overline{11}$   $\overline{2}$   $\overline{7}$   $\overline{5}$   $\overline{5}$  '   
 $\overline{5}$   $\overline{9}$   $\overline{2}$   $\overline{6}$   $\overline{8}$   $\overline{15}$   $\overline{5}$  , and  $\overline{19}$   $\overline{3}$   $\overline{2}$   $\overline{13}$   $\overline{1}$   $\overline{5}$   $\overline{5}$   $\overline{6}$   $\overline{4}$   $\overline{8}$



2. What is the last part of the music called:

$\overline{12}$   $\overline{1}$   $\overline{15}$   $\overline{1}$   $\overline{3}$

3. A theme played over and over is a set of:

$\overline{17}$   $\overline{7}$   $\overline{2}$   $\overline{6}$   $\overline{7}$   $\overline{9}$   $\overline{6}$   $\overline{4}$   $\overline{8}$   $\overline{5}$

4. Who are the two composers credited with this piece of music:

$\overline{19}$   $\overline{1}$   $\overline{2}$   $\overline{13}$   $\overline{3}$   $\overline{18}$   $\overline{18}$  and  $\overline{11}$   $\overline{2}$   $\overline{6}$   $\overline{9}$   $\overline{9}$   $\overline{3}$   $\overline{8}$

**Solve the puzzle:**

$\overline{7}$   $\overline{12}$   $\overline{1}$   $\overline{15}$   $\overline{1}$   $\overline{3}$   $\overline{6}$   $\overline{5}$   $\overline{7}$   $\overline{9}$   $\overline{14}$   $\overline{19}$   $\overline{3}$   $\overline{4}$   $\overline{12}$   $\overline{7}$   $\overline{13}$   $\overline{7}$   $\overline{8}$   $\overline{4}$   $\overline{8}$

$\overline{4}$   $\overline{2}$   $\overline{2}$   $\overline{4}$   $\overline{1}$   $\overline{8}$   $\overline{16}$   $\overline{14}$   $\overline{4}$   $\overline{1}$   $\overline{7}$   $\overline{8}$   $\overline{16}$   $\overline{14}$   $\overline{4}$   $\overline{1}$   $\overline{2}$   $\overline{12}$   $\overline{2}$   $\overline{6}$   $\overline{3}$   $\overline{8}$   $\overline{16}$   $\overline{5}$

$\overline{13}$   $\overline{7}$   $\overline{8}$   $\overline{5}$   $\overline{6}$   $\overline{8}$   $\overline{15}$   $\overline{4}$   $\overline{8}$   $\overline{3}$  :  $\overline{2}$   $\overline{4}$   $\overline{10}$  '  $\overline{2}$   $\overline{4}$   $\overline{10}$  '  $\overline{2}$   $\overline{4}$   $\overline{10}$   $\overline{14}$   $\overline{4}$   $\overline{1}$   $\overline{2}$

$\overline{11}$   $\overline{4}$   $\overline{7}$   $\overline{9}$  .  $\overline{6}$   $\overline{9}$   $\overline{6}$   $\overline{5}$   $\overline{7}$   $\overline{13}$   $\overline{7}$   $\overline{8}$   $\overline{4}$   $\overline{8}$   $\overline{11}$   $\overline{3}$   $\overline{13}$   $\overline{7}$   $\overline{1}$   $\overline{5}$   $\overline{3}$   $\overline{7}$

$\overline{9}$   $\overline{1}$   $\overline{8}$   $\overline{3}$   $\overline{6}$   $\overline{5}$   $\overline{19}$   $\overline{18}$   $\overline{7}$   $\overline{14}$   $\overline{3}$   $\overline{16}$   $\overline{4}$   $\overline{17}$   $\overline{3}$   $\overline{2}$   $\overline{7}$   $\overline{8}$   $\overline{16}$   $\overline{4}$   $\overline{17}$   $\overline{3}$   $\overline{2}$  .

Complete the puzzle, color the pictures and send these pages to us to enter a drawing for classical music cd for children and tickets for your family to a WSO concert.

Call us if you have any questions - 586-754-2950

Warren Symphony Orchestra

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