



# 2019 The Orff Instrumentarium, the Majesty and the Mystique, Part 1

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## *Theme and Variations*

A great way to combine timbres and showcase the Orff instrumentarium, theme and variations can be a wonderful way to provide music for a program, a story, or to just demonstrate the beauty of the Orff Instruments.

Jos Wuytack often composed variations on a theme to show some of the multitude of orchestration possibilities with the Orff instrumentarium. He called this "Orchestration per Contrastem." He simply meant that contrasting orchestrations could be built on a theme by manipulating the elements of music (melody, rhythm, meter, timbre, and form) to create thematically similar pieces.

The three types of variations are Ornamental, Contrapuntal, and Character. The type of variations that Wuytack used for most of his examples and the one that is the most child-friendly is the Character Variation. With Character Variations, subtle and not so subtle adjustments can be made to the theme in all of the basic elements, Melody, Rhythm, Timbre, Harmony, and Form. The examples that follow are character variations and serve as a review of some of the of the orchestration practices in functional harmony possible with the Orff instrumentarium. Each piece is based on a melodic fragment, a stylistic rhythm, a new meter, a unique orchestration or a new harmonization resulting in the original theme taking on a unique character. The following list is a useful guideline for developing Theme and Variations.

### *Melody*

- ✓ Use a melodic figure or motif from the theme.
- ✓ Embellish the melody with ornamentation .
- ✓ Change the mode or the key.
- ✓ Use techniques of counterpoint; imitation, repetition, contrary motion.

### *Rhythm*

- ✓ Change the meter; change mixed or odd meter; change from duple to triple or the reverse.
- ✓ Use a rhythmic figure or motif from the theme.
- ✓ Use a stylistic rhythm; blues, swing, old time, a renaissance dance rhythm like pavane or sara-bande.

### *Timbre*

- ✓ Change the orchestration to highlight a contrasting timbre.
- ✓ Change the register from high to low or the reverse.
- ✓ Spread the melody into different instruments.
- ✓ Explore and exploit dynamic and expressive contrasts.

### *Harmony*

- ✓ Use different harmonizations.
- ✓ Use elemental techniques including paraphony, diaphony, or canon.

### *Form*

- ✓ Develop a motif from the theme.
- ✓ Change the song form (A, AB, ABA, ABC)
- ✓ Use and extended form like the Rondo or the Sonata.

*Theme and Variations on Mary Had a Little Lamb. (Children's Song, arr.BMH)*

*Theme*

This is a classic I-V orchestration in C Major. Look for the common tone, the tone color formula, the paraphony, and the syncopated bass part.

# MARY HAD A LITTLE LAMB

ARR. BMH

The first system of the musical score consists of five staves labeled AR, GL, SX, AX, and BX. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The AR staff begins with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. The GL staff begins with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. The SX staff begins with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature, with the instruction "on repeat" written above the first measure. The AX staff begins with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. The BX staff begins with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. The music is written in a style that suggests a specific orchestration or instrumental arrangement.

The second system of the musical score consists of five staves labeled AR, GL, SX, AX, and BX. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The AR staff begins with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. The GL staff begins with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. The SX staff begins with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. The AX staff begins with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. The BX staff begins with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. The music is written in a style that suggests a specific orchestration or instrumental arrangement. The system concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Variation 1 - Gamboling

This is a rhythmic variation of the melody. Moving to G Major, the accompaniment uses combinations of interesting timbres and features mixed meter. The accompaniment is based on a Wuytack-style alberti bass accompaniment found in his wonderful book, Colores.

# GAMBOLING

BMH

The musical score for 'Gamboling' is arranged for a variety of instruments and percussion. It is written in G Major and features a complex, mixed-meter accompaniment. The score is divided into two systems, each with two measures of music. The first system includes staves for SR (Snare Drum), Triangle, Claves, and BX (Bass Xylophone). The second system includes staves for SR, GL (Glockenspiel), SX (Saxophone), Cym. BD (Cymbal/Bass Drum), BX, and CBX (Cajon/Bass Xylophone). The key signature is one sharp (F#). The time signature changes from 4/4 to 6/8 and back to 4/4. The score includes first and second endings, indicated by '1.' and '2.' above the final measures of each system. The accompaniment is based on a Wuytack-style alberti bass pattern.

*Variation 2 - Counting Sheep*

A melodic variation in Dorian Mode, this time the melody is inverted and the meter is ternary. Using only metals with a level bordun using 3 levels plus a solo soprano recorder, let's put the baby to sleep.

Counting Sheep

arr. BMH

*“Mary Had a Little Lamb”*

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Mary had a little lamb,  
 whose fleece was white as snow.

And so the teacher turned it out,  
 but still it lingered near,

And everywhere that Mary went,  
 the lamb was sure to go.

And waited patiently about,  
 till Mary did appear.

It followed her to school one day  
 which was against the rules.

“Why does the lamb love Mary so?”  
 the eager children cry.

It made the children laugh and play,  
 to see a lamb at school.

“Why, Mary loves the lamb, you know.”  
 the teacher did reply

### Variation 3 - Lamb Chop Charlie

This is a character variation in the key of F that takes the melody to the world of calypso. The contour of the theme is intact with rhythmic variations. Note the classic I-V harmonization.

## Lamb Chop Charlie

arr. BMH

The musical score is arranged in two systems. The first system contains staves for SX, AX, AM, Maracas, Equiro, Bongos, and BX. The second system contains staves for SX, AX, AM, Mca., Equiro, Bng., and BX. The score is in the key of F major (one flat) and 4/4 time. The SX and AX parts feature a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The AM part provides a harmonic accompaniment with quarter notes. The Maracas part has a steady eighth-note pattern. The Equiro part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with a sharp sign. The Bongos part has a steady eighth-note pattern. The BX part features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The second system includes a measure number '5' above the first staff. The score concludes with repeat signs and a final cadence.

*Variation 4 - Bmal Elttil a Dah Yram*

This is also a character variation using the humoristic device of splitting the melody among various instruments for comedic effect.

It's also a little like a drum circle piece. Let the voices in the A section enter one at a time and repeat ad. lib. When a signal is given to end play the last four measures for a big finish.

*Bmal Elttil a Dah Yram*

**A**

arr. BMH

Musical score for section A in 2/4 time. The score is arranged for five instruments: Metals, Woods, Rattles, Hand Drums, and Big Drums. The notation uses stems and beams to indicate rhythmic patterns. In the first measure, Hand Drums and Big Drums play. In the second measure, Metals and Woods enter. In the third measure, Rattles enter. In the fourth measure, all instruments play together. The piece ends with a repeat sign.

**B**

Last Time

Musical score for section B in 2/4 time, labeled 'Last Time'. The instruments are Metals, Woods, Rats, HD (Hand Drums), and Big Drums. This section features more complex rhythmic patterns, including accents (>) and slurs. The instruments enter in a staggered fashion, similar to section A, but with more intricate rhythmic details. The piece concludes with a final flourish and a repeat sign.