

I'ITOI VARIATIONS

FOR TWO PIANOS



BY
KYLE GANN
1985

I'itoi Variations (1985)

I'itoi is the mythic Elder Brother of the Papago Indians of southern Arizona, the famous "man in the maze" of Papago art. He figures in the creation myth as a shadow figure to Earth Doctor, and bears certain resemblances to the Aztec Quetzalcoatl; he led the Papago to their present land, created the calendar, taught them to smoke tobacco, bothered the young women, was killed by his own people, and came back to life before disappearing back into the earth.

The Papago keep I'itoi's myth alive through a long cycle of songs, of which *I'itoi Variations* is based on the "Song of the Black Mountain" (originally recorded on Everest, later available on Legacy international CD 388). I was intrigued not only by the song's unusual rhythm, with its shift between dotted and undotted beats, but by the women's moving drone above the men's melody. The translated text of the song is as follows:

There was a black mountain in the ocean. There was an unseen cloud coming toward that mountain. It went into the black mountain and made it wet.

Across I'itoi's death-and-rebirth story I superimposed a worldly/spiritual contrast modeled after Beethoven's Op. 111 Sonata. Variation VI is the crisis point, the Scorpionic death/transformation; Variation VII is the alchemical rebirth as spirit. Variation II is an homage to Busoni's two-piano masterpiece *Fantasia Contrappuntistica*. Variation IX is subtitled "Hoodoo" after the lumpy, vertical rock formation characteristic of so many Utah canyons. The Finale carves metaphorical petroglyphs (rock drawings) on the slowed-down, rocklike theme, then turns back for a quick trip through all eleven variations in reverse order.

I'itoi Variations was a calculatedly ambitious work, a summing up of my education. I was about to turn 30, had quit my job to stay home with my newborn son, and was propelled by a need to achieve something big and difficult. I admired the "intellectual" monumentality of the two-piano repertoire, including Busoni's Fantasia, Wallingford Riegger's Op. 54 Variations, Bartok's Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion, Stockhausen's *Mantra*, Ligeti's *Monument / Selbst-Portrait / Bewegung*, Zimmermann's *Monologe*, Reich's *Piano Phase* - each of which left its mark on the piece some way or another. *I'itoi Variations* was written with the help of a grant from the American Ritual Theater Company, and was initially published by Editions V in Essen, Germany (run by Gerhard Stäbler). It seemed commodious enough to merit two dedicatees: my wife Nancy and my fellow political composer Frank Abbinanti.

World premiere: May 4, 1990, at Cooper Union's Great Hall by Double Edge (Nurit Tilles and Edmund Niemann)

to Frank Abbinanti and Nancy Cook

I'itoi Variations

for two pianos

Kyle Gann
1985

Theme

$\text{♩} = 112$, $\text{♪} = 168$

The musical score consists of two staves. The top staff is for Piano 1 and the bottom staff is for Piano 2. Both staves are in common time (indicated by '9'). The piano 1 staff begins with a dynamic of *f*. The piano 2 staff begins with a dynamic of *f* at measure 9. The music consists of eighth-note patterns.

The musical score continues with two staves. The top staff is for Piano 1 and the bottom staff is for Piano 2. Both staves are in common time (indicated by '12'). The piano 1 staff begins with a dynamic of *f*. The piano 2 staff begins with a dynamic of *f* at measure 9. The music consists of eighth-note patterns.

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I'itoi Variations

Musical score for two pianos (Pno. 1 and Pno. 2) in 12/8 time. The score consists of two staves. Pno. 1 starts with a rest, followed by eighth-note pairs. Pno. 2 starts with eighth-note pairs, followed by a dynamic *p*. Both staves then play eighth-note pairs in a continuous loop. Measure 18 begins with a dynamic *mp*.

(8)

23

Pno. 1

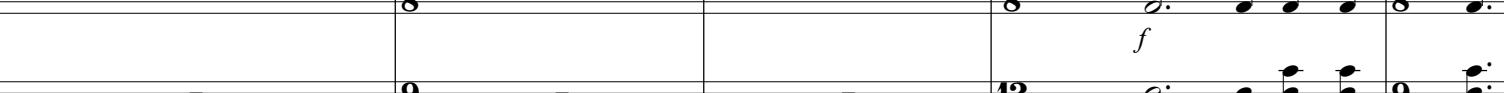
Pno. 2

slight ritard.

Var. I

J. = 72

29 $\text{♩} = 72$

Pno. 1 { 

Brutish but light 

Pno. 2 { 

34

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

38

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

The musical score consists of two staves. The top staff, labeled "Pno. 1", starts with a bass clef, a key signature of one flat, and a common time signature. It features two measures of chords followed by a measure of eighth-note patterns. The bottom staff, labeled "Pno. 2", starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. It features a measure of rests followed by a measure of eighth-note patterns. Both staves transition to a 12/8 time signature. The piano part for Pno. 2 includes dynamic markings such as a crescendo line and a decrescendo line.

43

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

The musical score consists of two staves. The top staff, labeled "Pno. 1", starts with a bass clef, a key signature of one flat, and a common time signature. It features a measure of eighth-note patterns followed by a measure of sixteenth-note patterns. The bottom staff, labeled "Pno. 2", starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. It features a measure of rests followed by a measure of eighth-note patterns. Both staves transition to a 9/8 time signature. The piano part for Pno. 2 includes dynamic markings such as a crescendo line and a decrescendo line. A tempo marking "8^{vb}" is placed below the staff.

I'ittoi Variations

49

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

$8vb$

54

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

mf

p

$8vb$

I'itoi Variations

Var. II: Homage to Busoni

 $\text{J} = 204$

Musical score for two pianos (Pno. 1 and Pno. 2) in 9/8 time. The score consists of two systems of five measures each. Measure 60: Both pianos play eighth-note patterns. Pno. 1 starts with a sustained note. Measure 61: Both pianos play eighth-note patterns. Pno. 1 starts with a sustained note. Measure 62: Both pianos play eighth-note patterns. Pno. 1 starts with a sustained note. Measure 63: Both pianos play eighth-note patterns. Pno. 1 starts with a sustained note. Measure 64: Both pianos play eighth-note patterns. Pno. 1 starts with a sustained note. Measure 65: Pno. 1 plays eighth-note chords. Pno. 2 plays eighth-note chords. Dynamics: p , mf , p . Measure 66: Pno. 1 plays eighth-note chords. Pno. 2 plays eighth-note chords.

Musical score for two pianos (Pno. 1 and Pno. 2) in 9/8 time. The score consists of two systems of five measures each. Measure 66: Pno. 1 plays eighth-note chords. Pno. 2 plays eighth-note chords. Dynamics: p , mp . Measure 67: Pno. 1 plays eighth-note chords. Pno. 2 plays eighth-note chords. Dynamics: pp . Measure 68: Pno. 1 plays eighth-note chords. Pno. 2 plays eighth-note chords. Dynamics: pp . Measure 69: Pno. 1 plays eighth-note chords. Pno. 2 plays eighth-note chords. Dynamics: pp . Measure 70: Pno. 1 plays eighth-note chords. Pno. 2 plays eighth-note chords. Dynamics: pp .

72

Pno. 1

This section of the score shows two staves for piano. The top staff (Pno. 1) begins with a dotted half note followed by eighth-note pairs. It includes dynamic markings *p* and *mf*. The bottom staff (Pno. 2) consists of eighth-note pairs. Measures 73-74 show eighth-note pairs in both staves. Measure 75 features eighth-note pairs in Pno. 1 and sixteenth-note pairs in Pno. 2. Measure 76 concludes with eighth-note pairs in both staves.

Pno. 2

77

Pno. 1

This section shows two staves. Pno. 1 starts with eighth-note pairs and transitions to sixteenth-note patterns. Pno. 2 follows a similar pattern of eighth-note pairs. Measure 78 introduces sixteenth-note patterns in both staves. Measures 79-80 continue these sixteenth-note patterns. Measure 81 concludes with eighth-note pairs in both staves.

Pno. 2

82

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

87

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

92

93

94

95

96

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

97

98

99

100

101

I'itoi Variations

10

102

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

107

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

112

pp

ff

mf

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

117

v v v v

v v v v

I'itoi Variations

Var. III

122

Pno. 1

slight accelerando

Pno. 2

slight accelerando

$\text{♩} = 160-168$

128

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

p

f

p

f

134

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

140

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

145

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

150

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

158

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Pno. 2

164

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Pno. 1 {

Pno. 2 {

Var. IV

Pno. 1 {

Attacca

$\downarrow = 40\text{--}48$ Freely (16ths can be a little faster than general tempo)

Pno. 2 {

179

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

183

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

ppp

not rolled

Musical score for piano duet, page 187, measures 187-190. The score consists of two staves: Pno. 1 (top) and Pno. 2 (bottom). The key signature is A major (three sharps). Measure 187 starts with a dynamic of *ppp*. Measure 188 begins with a dynamic of *p*. Measure 189 starts with a dynamic of *p*, followed by *pp* and *ppp*. Measure 190 starts with a dynamic of *ppp*. Various performance instructions are present, such as "not rolled" and "3". Measure numbers 187, 188, 189, and 190 are indicated above the staves.

Var. V: Canon Interruptus

$\text{♩} = 168$ Extremely fast and always light

Pno. 1 { *mp* *f* *mp*

Pno. 2 { *mp* *f*

198

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Pno. 2

204

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Pno. 2

211

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

217

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

223

Pno. 1 {

Pno. 2 {

229

Pno. 1 {

Pno. 2 {

235

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

241

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Var. VI

246

Pno. 1 { *f* *ff* *mf*

Pno. 2 { *f* *ff* Impetuous $\text{J.} = 144$

252

Pno. 1 { *f* $\overbrace{\text{6}}^3 \quad \overbrace{\text{6}}^3$ $\overbrace{\text{6}}^3 \quad \overbrace{\text{6}}^3$

Pno. 2 { *p* $\overbrace{\text{6}}^3 \quad \overbrace{\text{6}}^3$ *mp*

I'itoi Variations

259

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

263

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

268

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

273

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

279

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

283

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

288

Pno. 1

8va

Pno. 2

294

Pno. 1

even a little faster

Pno. 2

Pno. 1 {

299 increasing in intensity little by little

Pno. 2 {

increasing in intensity little by little

Pno. 1 {

306

Pno. 2 {

312

Pno. 1

slight ritard.

Pno. 2

slight ritard.

318

Pno. 1

mp

Pno. 2

mf

I'ittoi Variations

Peaceful $\text{♩} = 100$

Pno. 1 { $\text{♩} = 100$
 p $\text{♩} = 100$
 mp pp } $\text{♩} = 100$

Pno. 2 { impatient $\text{♩} = 216$
 f f $\text{♩} = 216$
 p }

at tempo $\text{♩} = 176$ long $\text{♩} = 216$

Pno. 1 { f pp mp pp f } $\text{♩} = 176$ long $\text{♩} = 216$

Pno. 2 { pp pp long f }

341

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

(tr)

31

8va

Original tempo
♩ = 144

342

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

346

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

350

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

I'itoi Variations

355

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

361

Pno. 1

not too long

Pno. 2

not too long

at tempo

I'itoi Variations

Var. VII

368 $\text{♩} = 100$

Pno. 1 *p consummately peaceful*

Pno. 2 *p consummately peaceful*

very delicate

*mp**Ped.*

374

Pno. 1 *p very delicate*

Pno. 2 *p very delicate*

mp

Ped.

Ped.

380

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

p

pp

mp

Ped.

pp

387

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

8vb

pp

p

Ped.

I'ittoi Variations

394

Pno. 1

8vb

Pno. 2

8va

pp

mp

Ped.

pp

Var. VIII

400 $\text{♩} = 120$ Limpid, without accents

Pno. 1

ppp

p

Pno. 2

mp

ppp

(mp)

8va

404 *pp*

Pno. 1

Pno. 2 *p*

mp

8va

408

Pno. 1

Pno. 2 *with growing intensity*

412

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

416

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

420

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

subito p

423

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

gradual crescendo

ff

I'itoi Variations

426

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

cresc.

more and more insistent

429

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

subito pp

subito pp

Var. IX: Hoodoo

41

Pno. 1 {

432

mp

p

brief

Attacca

Pno. 2 {

p

Very fast, soft and light as possible,
generally without pedal

Pno. 1 {

436

15

9/8

Faster

Pno. 2 {

pp

f

p

Tempo

Faster

Pno. 1

443

Pno. 1

12

pp

p

Pno. 2

12

Pno. 1

450

9

Tempo

Pno. 2

9

p rush

Tempo

8vb

458

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

466

Rush Tempo

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

473

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

mp

Rush

Tempo

p

480

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

488 Accel.

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Tempo

493

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Rush

Tempo

500

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Slower

507

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Var. X

Stark, almost violent, but decrescendoing to the end

 $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 104$

514

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

with pedal on each chord

Pno. 2

520

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

526

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

This musical score page contains two staves for two pianos. The top staff, labeled 'Pno. 1', begins with a dynamic of *p*. The bottom staff, labeled 'Pno. 2', begins with a dynamic of *p*, followed by a measure of *mf*. Both staves feature complex harmonic progressions with frequent changes in key signature, primarily between B-flat major and E major.

533

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

This musical score page continues from the previous one, starting at measure 533. The top staff, 'Pno. 1', has dynamics of *mp* and *pp*, with a measure of *mp* following. The bottom staff, 'Pno. 2', has a dynamic of *3*. Both staves continue their intricate harmonic patterns.

Var. XI: Finale - The 41 Petroglyphs

49

542

Pno. 1 {

pp

Pno. 2 {

pp

Attacca

pp - delicately, but with inexorable momentum

2 5 2

8va

546

Pno. 1 {

Pno. 2 {

pp

548

Pno. 1

8va

Pno. 2

mf - calmly

550

Pno. 1

8va

Pno. 2

mp

I'itoi Variations

552

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

554

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

I'itoi Variations

556

Pno. 1

8va

pp

mp

5 5

Pno. 2

8va

p

pp

mp

3 3

558

Pno. 1

8va

pp

mp

3 3

Pno. 2

8va

pp

mp

3 3

560

Pno. 1

8va 3

pp

mp

9

mp

mp

pp

mp

pp

Pno. 2

p

mp

pp

mp

5

3

p

562

Pno. 1

8va

pp

mp

pp

f

pp

Pno. 2

p

pp

3

3

tr

f

tr

tr

pp

I'itoi Variations

564

Pno. 1

mf

pp

8va

3 *3* *3*

Pno. 2

mp

8va

mp

p

pp

566

Pno. 1

mf

5 *5* *5* *5*

pp

8va

3 *3* *3*

Pno. 2

mp

I'itoi Variations

567

Pno. 1

(8) 3 |

mp

pp 3 |

mp 5 |

Pno. 2

p 3 |

p 3 |

mp 3 |

pp 3 |

569

Pno. 1

5 *pp* |

pp |

mp |

mp |

Pno. 2

p 3 |

p 3 |

pp 3 |

pp 3 |

loco

I'itoi Variations

571

Pno. 1

This musical score page contains two staves for pianos. The top staff (Pno. 1) begins with eighth-note patterns in common time. It includes dynamic markings such as *pp*, *mf*, *mp*, and grace notes. The bottom staff (Pno. 2) starts with a sustained note at *p*, followed by eighth-note chords. Measure 572 continues with eighth-note chords and grace notes.

Pno. 2

p

pp

mf

mp

mp

573

Pno. 1

This musical score page contains two staves for pianos. The top staff (Pno. 1) features sixteenth-note patterns with dynamics *mf*, *pp*, and *pp*. The bottom staff (Pno. 2) includes sustained notes and eighth-note chords. Measure 574 continues with sixteenth-note patterns and sustained notes.

Pno. 2

8va

mf

pp

pp

8va

p

mp

p

I'ittoi Variations

Coda

57

575 *8va* Pno. 1 {
 Pno. 2 {
 Measures 575-576: The score shows two staves for piano duet. Pno. 1 (top) starts with eighth-note chords in a minor key, followed by sixteenth-note patterns with grace notes. Pno. 2 (bottom) begins with eighth-note chords. Measure 576 starts with eighth-note chords, followed by sixteenth-note patterns with grace notes. The dynamics are *f*, *p*, *f*, *pp*, *f*.

577 Pno. 1 {
 Pno. 2 {
 Measures 577-578: The score shows two staves for piano duet. Pno. 1 (top) starts with eighth-note chords, followed by sixteenth-note patterns with grace notes. Pno. 2 (bottom) begins with eighth-note chords. The dynamics are *p*, *mp*, *mf*, *p*.
 Measures 579-580: The score continues with eighth-note chords and sixteenth-note patterns. The dynamics are *pp*, *mf*, *p*.

I'ittoi Variations

579

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

581

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

I'itoi Variations

583

Pno. 1 { *ff* *p*

Pno. 2 { *ff* *mp*

$\frac{8}{8}$ $\text{♩} = 168$

587

Pno. 1 {

Pno. 2 {

$\frac{12}{8}$ $\frac{9}{8}$ *mf*

$\frac{12}{8}$ $\frac{9}{8}$ *p*

$\frac{12}{8}$ $\frac{9}{8}$ *mp*

subito p

I'ittoi Variations

592

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

$\text{d} = 168$

mp

p

mp

f

p

tr

$\text{d} = 168$

p

p

598

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

$\text{d} = 168$

mf

v

v

v

v

v

v

v

f

mf

v

v

v

v

v

v

v

v

v

Molto ritard.....

603

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Molto ritard.....

609

Accelerando - as much as possible

Pno. 1

mp

Accelerando - as much as possible

Pno. 2

mp

*April - December, 1985
Glenview, Illinois*

I'ittoi Variations