

Chapter 1 : Elgar : Enigma Variations

Edward Elgar composed his Variations on an Original Theme, Op. 36, popularly known as the Enigma Variations, between October and February. It is an orchestral work comprising fourteen variations on an original theme.

In the 41 year old composer was not yet nationally famous. Although he was steadily building his reputation as a composer and was receiving performances of his music in October Elgar went to the Leeds Festival to conduct the first performance of his cantata *Caractacus* he needed to supplement his income by teaching. Elgar had great fun asking his wife Alice if she could recognize which friend he was portraying and she was frequently successful in her guesses. The identity of the friends is not the enigma. The theme returns in G minor more fully scored in the third section. Listen for the counter-melody in the lower strings which combines the two sections. Lady Elgar recognized him in this portrayal immediately when Elgar was first improvising. His serious conversation was continually broken up by whimsical and witty remarks. This variation opens with the viola melody crossing from the fourth to the second string which is difficult for beginners and presumably Miss Fitton at one time. She accompanied the Elgars on vacation helping Edward organize his music and also keeping Alice company while Elgar was busy composing. The halting rhythm alludes to her slight speech impediment. Sinclair was the organist of Hereford Cathedral. *Nevinson Andante, G minor Basil G.* This variation begins and ends with a lovely cello solo. *Romanza, G major Lady Mary Lygon* Even though Elgar identified the friend signified by the asterisks to be Lady Mary Lygon and her initials are pencilled in a sketch, there has been speculation that it may portray someone else. But she did not sail until well after the variation was composed. *Allegro, G major* This variation is a self portrait: The original ending did not contain the present coda. It ended right after rehearsal number 1. After the premiere Jaeger persuaded Elgar that a more triumphant finale was needed. Elgar revised the ending which was first performed at the Worcester Three Choirs Festival on September 13th, with the composer conducting. The Enigma Variations was an immediate success. Elgar gained not only national recognition, but also international acclaim through performances conducted by Richard Strauss and Gustav Mahler. The Nimrod variation has become very popular in its own right. It is played every year at the Cenotaph in London on Remembrance Sunday. Gustav Holst offers this assessment:

*Enigma Variations: A Novel [André Aciman] on calendrierdelascience.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. André Aciman, hailed as a writer of "fiction at its most supremely interesting" (The New York Review of Books).*

Pronounced an instant gay classic, it tells the story of an affair between a teenage boy and a more experienced man. Structured around five loosely linked sections that vary in length from novella to short story, this episodic work jumps in time, tense and place, each section exploring a different erotic fixation. We are in deeply familiar Aciman territory: The young Paul — his portrait scant on biographical fact, fully revelatory on the ways of the heart and libido — has spent his summers with his parents on an Italian island, and has returned 10 years later. A torment of unfulfilled desire results. A thumping great daddy complex runs through this story, which is heavy with Freudian implications at every turn. I wanted him to be my father, I wanted to leave and walk away with him. The narrative moves seamlessly into earlier years: This Proustian meander captures truths about the contradictory drives of romantic love, but the pace can be excruciatingly slow, and the lack of any real knowledge of who or what Paul is creates a constant sensation of something missing. The next section, Spring Fever, makes a tonal leap, and could almost be the work of another writer. It is a sharper, more modern, present-tense urban tale. The adult Paul is living in New York with a woman called Maud. He spots her in a restaurant with a companion and his jealousy becomes overwhelming. The existence of a handsome tennis player has been cunningly inserted in Spring Fever, and the character becomes central to the next chapter. There is little actual sex in these tales of desire: Desire is all, categorisation redundant. The final two sections revolve around an on-off affair with a married woman met in youth, and an all-consuming email affair with a much younger writer. Love is unattainable, thwarted, never quite fulfilled. The absence of a conventional sense of story or structure reflects the musical form that Aciman is invoking, making this a clever experiment but also a frustrating one. *Enigma Variations* is published by Faber.

Chapter 3 : A Theme on Love: "Enigma Variations" - Los Angeles Review of Books

Enigma Variations, Variations on an Original Theme for Orchestra Op. 36, "Enigma", Sir Edward Elgar, Theme (Andante) Variation I. (L'.

Critics were at first irritated by the layer of mystification, but most praised the substance, structure, and orchestration of the work. Elgar later revised the final variation, adding 96 new bars and an organ part. Structure Edit The theme is followed by 14 variations. In addition, many of them contain a musical reference to a specific characteristic or event, such as a laugh, a habit of speech or a memorable conversation. The sections of the work are as follows. Andante The unusual melodic contours of the G minor opening theme convey a sense of searching introspection: Play audio file A switch to the major key introduces a flowing motif which briefly lightens the mood before the first theme returns, now accompanied by a sustained bass line and emotionally charged counterpoints. The variation repeats a four-note melodic fragment which Elgar reportedly whistled when arriving home to his wife. He was associated with B. This variation references R. This is the shortest of the variations. This variation leads into the next without pause. The variation good-naturedly mimics his enthusiastic incompetence on the piano. It may also refer to an occasion when Griffith and Elgar were out walking and got caught in a thunderstorm. The pair took refuge in the house of Winifred and Florence Norbury Sherridge, Leigh Sinton, near Malvern , to which the next variation refers. The gracious personalities of the ladies are sedately shown. He was a close friend of Elgar, giving him useful advice but also severe criticism, something Elgar greatly appreciated. Elgar later related how Jaeger had encouraged him as an artist and had stimulated him to continue composing despite setbacks. He referred to Ludwig van Beethoven , who had a lot of worries, but wrote more and more beautiful music. Only a hint, not a quotation. This variation features a melody for solo viola. In the words of Elgar: I did; here it is. Nevinson, an accomplished amateur cellist who played chamber music with Elgar. The variation is introduced and concluded by a solo cello. The themes from two variations are echoed: In July , one month after the original version was finished Jaeger urged Elgar to make the variation a little longer. After some cajoling Elgar agreed, and also added an organ part.

Chapter 4 : Elgar - His Music : Enigma Variations

Enigma Variations: Enigma Variations, series of 14 short musical portraits by Edward Elgar that premiered in London on June 19, The subjects of these portraits were several of the composer's friends and family.

A melody he played caught the attention of his wife Alice, who liked it and asked him to repeat it for her. So, to entertain her, he began to improvise variations on this melody, each one either a musical portrait of one of their friends, or in the musical style they might have used. Elgar eventually expanded and orchestrated these improvisations into the Enigma Variations. Critics were at first irritated by the layer of mystification, but most praised the substance, structure, and orchestration of the work. Elgar revised the final variation, adding new bars and an organ part; the new version, the one usually played today, was played at the Worcester Three Choirs Festival on 13 September, with Elgar conducting. Structure The work consists of the theme, followed by 14 variations. Elgar dedicated the piece to "my friends pictured within" and in the score each variation is prefaced with either a nickname or initials, a clue to the identity of the friend depicted. The sections of the piece are as follows. Theme Andante The theme consists of two contrasting melodic fragments, the first one the main theme: The main theme is played by the first violins at the beginning. It is played for a second time, with a slightly different accompaniment, after the second melody has been introduced by the woodwinds. Both fragments are further developed in the following variations. The theme leads into Variation 1 without a pause. The variation contains repetitions of a four-note melodic fragment which Elgar reportedly whistled whenever arriving home to his wife. He was associated with B. Cello and the Composer Violin for many years in this playing. His characteristic diatonic run over the keys before beginning to play is here humorously travestied in the semiquaver passages; these should suggest a Toccata, but chromatic beyond H. The Variation has a reference to R. Variation IV Allegro di molto "W. This is the shortest of the variations. Variation V Moderato "R. This variation leads into the next without pause. The melody of this variation is played by a solo viola. The variation good-naturedly mimics his enthusiastic incompetence on the piano. It also refers to a specific memory, of a day on which Griffiths and Elgar were walking and got caught in a thunder-storm. The pair ran for it, and took refuge in the Norbury house, to which the next theme refers. The theme also refers to the Norbury house, which Elgar was fond of. At the end of this variation, a single violin note is held over into the next variation, the most celebrated of the set. For a long time he was a close friend of Elgar, giving him useful advice, but also severe criticism, something Elgar greatly appreciated. Remarkably, Elgar later related on several occasions how Jaeger had encouraged him as an artist and had stimulated him to continue composing despite setbacks. He referred to Ludwig van Beethoven, who had a lot of worries, but wrote more and more beautiful music. Elgar disclosed to Dora that the opening bars of "Nimrod" were made to suggest that theme. This variation has become popular in its own right and is sometimes used at British funerals, memorial services, and other solemn occasions. It is always played at the Cenotaph in London on Remembrance Sunday. Allegretto "Dorabella" Dora Penny, a friend whose stutter is depicted by the woodwinds. Richard Powell, was the stepdaughter of the sister of William Meath Baker, inspiration for the fourth variation, and sister-in-law of Richard Baxter Townsend, inspiration for the third. Variation XI Allegro di molto "G. In the words of Elgar: The first few bars were suggested by his great Bulldog, Dan a well-known character falling down the steep bank into the River Wye bar 1; his paddling upstream to find a landing place bars 2 and 3; and his rejoicing bark on landing second half of bar 5. Nevinson, a well known cellist, who gets a cello melody for his variation. Later, Nevinson inspired Elgar to write his Cello Concerto. This person is not identified by initials, but Mrs. This is played by a solo clarinet, and is included within quotation marks in the score. A competing theory, propounded by conductor Sir Andrew Davis, is that this movement is about Helen Weaver, to whom Elgar was engaged for fourteen months. Weaver left for New Zealand also by boat in, "breaking his heart. The themes from two variations are echoed: Elgar called these references "entirely fitting to the intention of the piece". Elgar agreed, and also added an organ part. The new version was played for the first time at the Worcester Three Choirs Festival, with Elgar himself conducting, on 13 September. The identities of all are known, and Elgar himself even provided brief notes on the subjects to accompany the five

Duo-art pianola rolls of the Variations that the Aeolian Company introduced in 1908. Instead, there is a theme hidden in the work that is "not played. So the principal Theme never appears, even as in some late dramas. The alternation of the two quavers and two crotchets in the first bar and their reversal in the second bar will be noticed; references to this grouping are almost continuous either melodically or in the accompanying figures - in Variation XIII, beginning at bar 11 [], for example. The drop of a seventh in the Theme bars 3 and 4 should be observed. At bar 7 G major appears the rising and falling passage in thirds which is much used later, e.g. Variation III, bars 1-4. Julian Rushton suggests that any solution must satisfy five criteria, three of which stemming from the above quotations: Others have concluded that the theme is not a musical phrase but a literary or philosophical theme. Troyte Griffiths asked Elgar if the former was the hidden theme, and Elgar replied, "Of course not! Whitten, who suggested "Pop Goes the Weasel" as the theme. Edwards in 1931 and Robert Buckley in 1932, have held that the theme is a "countermelody to some other unheard tune": Edwards wrote, "In connection with these much discussed Variations, Mr Elgar tells us that the heading Enigma is justified by the fact that it is possible to add another phrase, which is quite familiar, above the original theme that he has written. What that theme is no one knows except the composer. Thereby hangs the Enigma. A recent theory, proposed by Clive McClelland of the University of Leeds, suggests that the hidden theme is the hymn tune "Now the day is over". The real theme of the Enigma Variations which is present everywhere throughout the work in different shapes, is rather short: As Westgeest states, the symbolism of this is evident: By doing so, the artist triumphs over depression and discouragement in the Finale, "E. Professor Ian Parrott, former vice-president of the Elgar Society, in his book on Elgar Master Musicians, wrote that the "dark saying", and possibly the whole of the Enigma, had a biblical source, 1 Corinthians 13:2. Elgar was a practising Roman Catholic and on 12 February 1908, eight days before the completion of the Variations, he attended Quinquagesima Mass at St. Paul's Cathedral. This particular verse was read. Another theme that has been suggested is the mathematical constant pi, which is "well known". The first four notes of the Variations are the scale degrees C, D, E, F, which correspond to an approximation of pi. On 24 May Elgar conducted a performance of the Variations at a Memorial Concert in aid of the family survivors of musicians who had been lost in the Titanic disaster. John Bull, with bulldog and all. Elgar, then a solid conservative, wrote his patriotic cantata Caractacus Op. 71.

Chapter 5 : Edward Elgar: Enigma Variations - Classic FM

- *Composer: Sir Edward William Elgar, 1st Baronet, OM, GCVO (2 June -- 23 February) - Orchestra: Royal Philharmonic Orchestra - Conductor: Andrew Litton.*

Structure[edit] The theme is followed by 14 variations. Elgar dedicated the piece to "my friends pictured within" and in the score each variation is prefaced the initials, name or nickname of the friend depicted. In addition, many of them contain a musical reference to a specific characteristic or event, such as a laugh, a habit of speech or a memorable conversation. The sections of the work are as follows. Andante [edit] The unusual melodic contours of the G minor opening theme convey a sense of searching introspection: A switch to the major key introduces a flowing motif which briefly lightens the mood before the first theme returns, now accompanied by a sustained bass line and emotionally charged counterpoints. The variation repeats a four-note melodic fragment which Elgar reportedly whistled when arriving home to his wife. Variation II Allegro "H. Elgar wrote, "Hew David Steuart-Powell was a well-known amateur pianist and a great player of chamber music. He was associated with B. His characteristic diatonic run over the keys before beginning to play is here humorously travestied in the semiquaver passages; these should suggest a Toccata , but chromatic beyond H. This variation references R. Variation IV Allegro di molto "W. He "expressed himself somewhat energetically". This is the shortest of the variations. Variation V Moderato "R. This variation leads into the next without pause. The variation, with a time signature of 1 1, good-naturedly mimics his enthusiastic incompetence on the piano. It may also refer to an occasion when Griffith and Elgar were out walking and got caught in a thunderstorm. The pair took refuge in the house of Winifred and Florence Norbury Sherridge, Leigh Sinton, near Malvern , to which the next variation refers. The gracious personalities of the ladies are sedately shown. Elgar later related how Jaeger had encouraged him as an artist and had stimulated him to continue composing despite setbacks. In Elgar told Dora Penny "Dorabella" that this variation is not really a portrait, but "the story of something that happened". He referred to Ludwig van Beethoven , who had a lot of worries, but wrote more and more beautiful music. Elgar disclosed to Dora that the opening bars of "Nimrod" were made to suggest that theme. Only a hint, not a quotation. A version was also played during the Hong Kong handover ceremony in and at the opening ceremony of the London Olympic Games. Allegretto "Dorabella"[edit] Dora Penny, a friend whose stutter is gently parodied by the woodwinds. This variation features a melody for solo viola. Variation XI Allegro di molto "G. In the words of Elgar: The first few bars were suggested by his great bulldog, Dan a well-known character falling down the steep bank into the River Wye bar 1 ; his paddling upstream to find a landing place bars 2 and 3 ; and his rejoicing bark on landing second half of bar 5. I did; here it is. The variation is introduced and concluded by a solo cello. The themes from two variations are echoed: Elgar called these references "entirely fitting to the intention of the piece". In July , one month after the original version was finished Jaeger urged Elgar to make the variation a little longer. After some cajoling Elgar agreed, and also added an organ part. The new version was played for the first time at the Worcester Three Choirs Festival , with Elgar himself conducting, on 13 September The Enigma[edit] The word "Enigma", serving as a title for the theme of the Variations, was added to the score at a late stage, after the manuscript had been delivered to the publisher. Despite a series of hints provided by Elgar, the precise nature of the implied puzzle remains unknown. The Enigma I will not explain â€” its "dark saying" must be left unguessed, and I warn you that the connexion between the Variations and the Theme is often of the slightest texture; further, through and over the whole set another and larger theme "goes", but is not played. The phrase "dark saying" can be read straightforwardly as an archaic synonym for enigma but might equally plausibly be interpreted as a cryptic clue, while the word "further" seems to suggest that the "larger theme" is distinct from the Enigma, forming a separate component of the puzzle. Elgar provided another clue in an interview he gave in October to the editor of the Musical Times , F. Mr Elgar tells us that the heading Enigma is justified by the fact that it is possible to add another phrase, which is quite familiar, above the original theme that he has written. What that theme is no one knows except the composer. Thereby hangs the Enigma. The interpretation placed on the "larger theme" forms the basis of the grouping of solutions in the

summary that follows. Julian Rushton has suggested that any solution should satisfy five criteria: In the following three examples the counterpoints involve complete renditions of both the Enigma theme and the proposed "larger theme", and the associated texts have obvious "dark" connotations. In his book on the Variations Patrick Turner advanced a solution based on a counterpoint with a minor key version the nursery rhyme Twinkle, twinkle, little star. Elgar meaningfully composed this short "Elgar theme" as a countermelody to the beginning of the hidden "principal Theme" of the piece, i. When the two themes are combined each note of the first part of the Beethoven theme is followed by the same note in the Elgar theme. So musically Elgar "follows" Beethoven, as Jaeger told him to do see above, Var. IX and, by doing so, in the vigorous, optimistic Finale the artist triumphs over his sadness and loneliness, expressed in the minor melody from the beginning. The whole piece is based on this "Elgar theme", in which the Beethoven theme is hidden and so the latter "goes through and over the whole set, but is not played". IX she could not solve the enigma because she did not see the connection between this and the enigma. Elgar had expected she would: I thought that you of all people would guess it. Edwards in is disregarded or discounted the field opens up to admit other kinds of connection with well-known themes. Entries in this category submitted to the Saturday Review competition included the suggestions: Moreover, the Art of Fugue consists 14 variations on the same fugue subject, just as the Enigma variations are 14 variations on the same subject, Bach signed his name "BACH" on the 14th fugue, just as Elgar signed his name "EDU" on the 14th variation, as well as other clues. Theodore van Houten proposed Rule, Britannia! Elgar was a practising Roman Catholic and on 12 February , eight days before the completion of the Variations, he attended a Mass at which this verse was read. Elgar created an original melody containing three references to Pi based on this humorous incident. His "dark saying" is a pun set off by an unexplained double bar after the first 24 notes all black notes Shortly before his death, Elgar wrote three sentences about the variations and each sentence contains a hint at pi. On 24 May Elgar conducted a performance of the Variations at a Memorial Concert in aid of the family survivors of musicians who had been lost in the Titanic disaster. Elgar suggested that in case the Variations were to be a ballet the Enigma would have to be represented by "a veiled dancer". His use of the word "veiled" possibly indicates that it was a female character.

Chapter 6 : "Enigma Variations" composer - Crossword Clue Answer | Crossword Heaven

The story is told of how Elgar, returning home from giving violin lessons, sat down at the piano and, to unwind, began improvising. Alice commented favourably on the tune that emerged and Elgar responded by suggesting how certain of their friends might play it.

If you like long sentences, you will like Aciman. Being a novel, or better yet a collection of linked stories about love, that makes it all the more appealing – for love, that indescribable emotion we have all felt and hopefully do still but inevitably have difficulty expressing, whether in words or deed, lends itself to the long description that, when beautifully worded, one almost wants to never end. The five stories that make up Enigma Variations are the first-person memoirs of Paul, a presumably Italian man I say this because of the Italian words and places in his childhood, not because he identifies himself as such of indeterminate age today, who is neither gay nor straight – but not bisexual either. He is at once gay, and at once straight, depending on a time of his life, but his sexual proclivities are less about sexual preference at any one time than about deep and passionate love. That crush, on a cabinet maker who repairs an ancient desk for his family, slowly reveals itself to be more than just a crush – it is the first time he has feelings that are at first recognizable as a schoolboy crush on an adult, no matter the gender, but that have become a sexual longing, too, and deep love, which is somewhat confusing to the boy and perhaps a little jarring to the reader. Neither had a sexual longing for the object of their crush, or at least that was what they claimed, but the crushes were nonetheless very real. And a few, of course, are gay, whether they know it yet or not, but not most, and for Paul, at the age of 12, he is far from identifying as such. He is merely in love. He exquisitely puts into language what we know of first love, whether we experience it early in life or later: In a bus, on a busy street, in class, in a crowded concert hall, once or twice a year, whether for a man or a woman, my heart still jolts when I spot your look-alike. We love only once in our lives, my father had said, sometimes too early, sometimes too late, the other times are always a touch deliberate. While some might argue with the narrator that his father was wrong about loving only once, who cannot identify with his subsequent jolts of the heart? The father in question, and not the mother who is not entirely unaware, is the person for whom our narrator reserves his familial love, and he is a more than sympathetic figure, an idealized man. That would be falling into a trap the author sets us – a way of thinking that I, who have always vaingloriously considered myself more enlightened or progressive on social issues than most of my peers now going into our 60s, have been guilty of. Why were the crushes my friends once described to me over dinner not actually love? And what if they had? Would that have made my friends gay? What did it matter, when it comes to love? At the beginning of the story, Paul sees Maud having lunch in a restaurant with another man. From shock, I think. Then I correct myself: He is convinced Maud is cheating on him, and he imagines the man he saw doing everything with Maud that he has done, and more. I may end up being jealous because I have to be. He imagines the conversations with her when he confronts her. Or is he in love with both Maud and Manfred? The agony of love is what I imagine everyone, straight or gay, can identify with: In short order, Paul and Chloe are naked in her apartment: I wanted to see it in her eyes as well, I said. Despite its descriptions, it is not sex that Aciman is describing in this story, but rather the longing his character has for another human being. It is obsessive longing by them both, but as with their college fling, something breaks too often for it to last. It is, while it lasts, a full-time, all-encompassing love, the kind that makes you want to do nothing but just be with the person of your affections, the world and ordinary life be damned – but then eventually just stops. Love that intense, perhaps, just cannot burn forever. Four years after the break, Paul and Chloe run into each other again at a party. And here, Chloe is married, and Paul is with Manfred. Within minutes of reuniting with Paul, this: I may love him. Because I think of you every day, all the time. As I know you think of me every day, all the time. But Paul and Chloe, perhaps finally unable to shake what never left them, see each other as a foursome at first, but then together. And together they are in love; they make love, they talk, they do what lovers, especially adulterous lovers who love each other, do. Both in life and in literature, love often conquers all: They love, but will not love together. Their last break is not a tragedy, but perhaps it is a regret for them both, Paul imagines. As he closes this chapter, he imagines

running into Chloe, inevitably at a party: It may not live, but it never dies. This time, Paul appears to be alone, much older. Paul has fallen for a younger woman – a writer who he thinks may be interested in him. Although old enough to be her father, he nonetheless behaves like a teenager – one too shy to ask the popular girl out, even though he caught her staring at him in class. He writes to Manfred, anguished, and Manfred writes back, encouraging him: It took two years with me. Perhaps we all, boys and girls, want to be that teenager one more time in our lives. The end of the story, and the end of the novel, is a surprise that brings a sort of sadness to the end, to the life and loves of Paul.

Chapter 7 : Enigma Variations by Andr  Aciman

Enigma Variations (My Friends Pictured Within) is a one-act ballet by Frederick Ashton, to the music of the *Variations on an Original Theme for orchestra ("Enigma")*, Op. 36 by Edward Elgar.

Chapter 8 : Enigma Variations by Andr  Aciman review – meditations on desire | Books | The Guardian

A passionate portrait of love's contradictory power, in five illuminating stories. Douglas Stevens My thoughts are that it covers much the same ground, but with a different (and more interesting) structure, and a decidedly different emphasis. And I moreMy thoughts are that it covers much the.

Chapter 9 : Enigma Variations (ballet) - Wikipedia

Auto Suggestions are available once you type at least 3 letters. Use up arrow (for mozilla firefox browser alt+up arrow) and down arrow (for mozilla firefox browser alt+down arrow) to review and enter to select.