

## **Twittering Variations [2007]**

Twenty variations for woodwind quintet

Commissioned by the Mexico City Woodwind Quintet with funds from the Howard Hanson Institute for American Music.

Premiered October 8, 2007 at Festival Internacional Cervantino.

Twittering Variations is an adaptation/transcription of material from my previous work Twittering Machines. About the original work I wrote:

The ideas the Swiss artist Paul Klee expressed concerning the structure of art have fascinated me for a long time. Klee, himself a part-time musician, compiled many of the technical features of his work in a number of volumes of inspiring pedagogic value.

Like several other composers, I have always felt attracted to what Klee could have called "twittering machines": the unpredictable mechanisms whose systematic—yet imperfect—behavior is not unlike the "processes" we often find in musical structures. I love to observe clockworks with missing or erratic parts; or a spider who laboriously tries to climb a wall, or one of those precarious robots built by Rodney Brooks, whose "function" is not to fulfill a task but, simply, to "exist". They are all twittering machines whose image, interestingly enough, often ignites my musical imagination. My "twittering machines", as expressed in this set, are an uninterrupted chain of short variations: tangible, yet always imperfect, musical "mechanisms".

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