



# Brooke Joyce

## He Hung His Head and Died

12 Variations for George Floyd

for piano four-hands

toydogmusic



He Hung His Head and Died: 12 Variations for George Floyd  
for piano four-hands

9:30 minutes

Brooke Joyce (2020)

Premiered by the Unison Piano Duo, December 2020

Program Note: During 2020, our country faced the twin pandemics of the coronavirus and systemic racism. While we saw the advent of multiple vaccines for Covid-19 at the end of the year, the work of addressing racism is a long, arduous and difficult journey. On an individual level, many of us in the arts responded to the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and many others by creating new work that encouraged us to reflect, react, and ultimately, to work for change. When I learned about George Floyd's murder on May 25, I could think of little else for several days. Ultimately, I was led to create this new work for the Unison Piano Duo (Du Huang and Xiao Hu), "He Hung His Head and Died (12 Variations for George Floyd)." At the heart of the piece is an African-American Spiritual, "He Never Said a Mumbalin' Word," which appears as a set of reverse variations, with the most veiled variation played at the beginning and the actual tune emerging as a coda at the end. The amount of time needed to play the 12 variations is approximately 8 minutes and 45 seconds, the amount of time it took for George Floyd to expire under the knee of a Minneapolis police officer.

Please inform the composer of any performances, [brookejoyce.com](http://brookejoyce.com).

# He Hung His Head and Died

Brooke Joyce (2020)

12 variations for George Floyd

Steady, unrelenting ♩ = 60

## Variation 1

Primo

Secondo

6

This musical score is for Variation 1, featuring two staves: Primo (Violin I) and Secondo (Violin II). The tempo is marked 'Steady, unrelenting' with a quarter note equal to 60 beats per minute. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The Primo staff begins with a series of chords in 4/4 time, marked *sffz* (sforzando) and *p* (piano). The Secondo staff follows with a similar pattern, also marked *sffz* and *p*. The score includes various musical notations such as accents (>), slurs, and dynamic markings. The Primo staff has a measure with a *8va* (octave) marking. The Secondo staff has a measure with a *8va* marking and a *p* marking. The score concludes with a final measure in 4/4 time.

## Variation 2

11

Musical score for Variation 2, measures 11-14. The score is written for piano (p) and includes a mezzo-piano (mp) section. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The score features a complex melodic line in the right hand, with a crescendo leading to a piano (p) section. The left hand provides harmonic support with chords and a bass line. A dynamic marking of *mp* is present in the first system, and a crescendo leads to a *p* marking in the second system. A *8va-* marking is visible above the staff.

15

Musical score for Variation 2, measures 15-18. The score continues with a piano (p) section. The key signature remains one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The right hand features a complex melodic line with triplets and a crescendo leading to a piano (p) section. The left hand provides harmonic support with chords and a bass line. A dynamic marking of *p* is present in the first system, and a crescendo leads to a *p* marking in the second system. A *8va-* marking is visible above the staff, and a *8vb-* marking is visible below the staff.

19

Variation 3

*p* espr.

*pp*

24

8va - -

8vb - - - - -

$$(8^{vb})$$
 $\overline{\overline{O}}$  $(g^{vb})$

35

Measures 35-36 of a musical score. Measure 35 features a treble clef staff with a melodic line of eighth and sixteenth notes, including accidentals (sharps and flats), and a bass clef staff with a single note. Measure 36 continues the treble staff melody and adds a bass staff with a descending eighth-note scale. A dynamic accent (>) is present in measure 35.

36

Measures 36-37 of a musical score. Measure 36 shows a treble staff with a complex melodic line and a bass staff with a descending eighth-note scale. Measure 37 continues the treble staff melody and adds a bass staff with a descending eighth-note scale. A dynamic accent (>) is present in measure 36, and a fortissimo (sfz) marking is present in measure 37.

37

Measures 37-38 of a musical score. Measure 37 features a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a descending eighth-note scale. Measure 38 continues the treble staff melody and adds a bass staff with a descending eighth-note scale. A dynamic marking of *mp* (mezzo-piano) is present in measure 37, and an *8va* (octave) marking is present in measure 38.

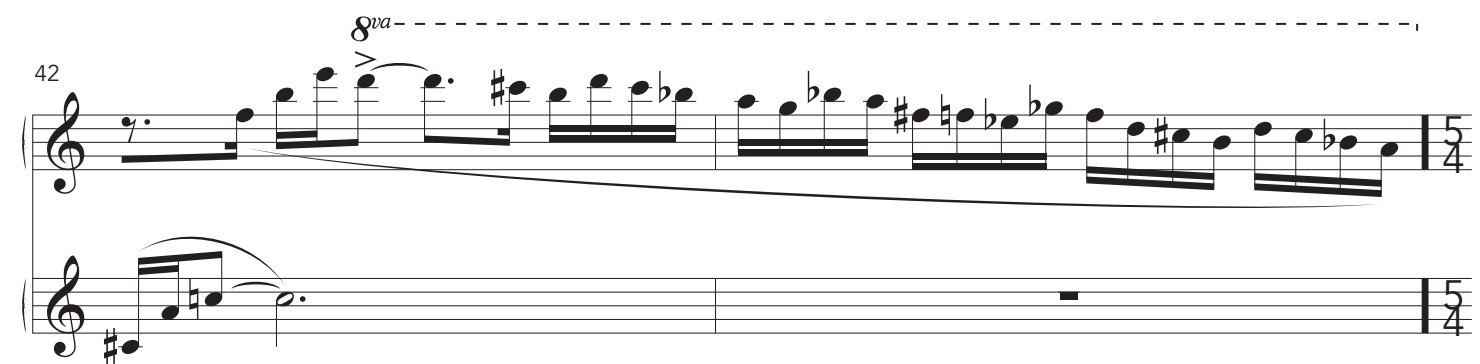
39



8va

*p*

42



8va

5/4

44

Variation 5



15ma

*mp*

*p*

< > < > < > < >