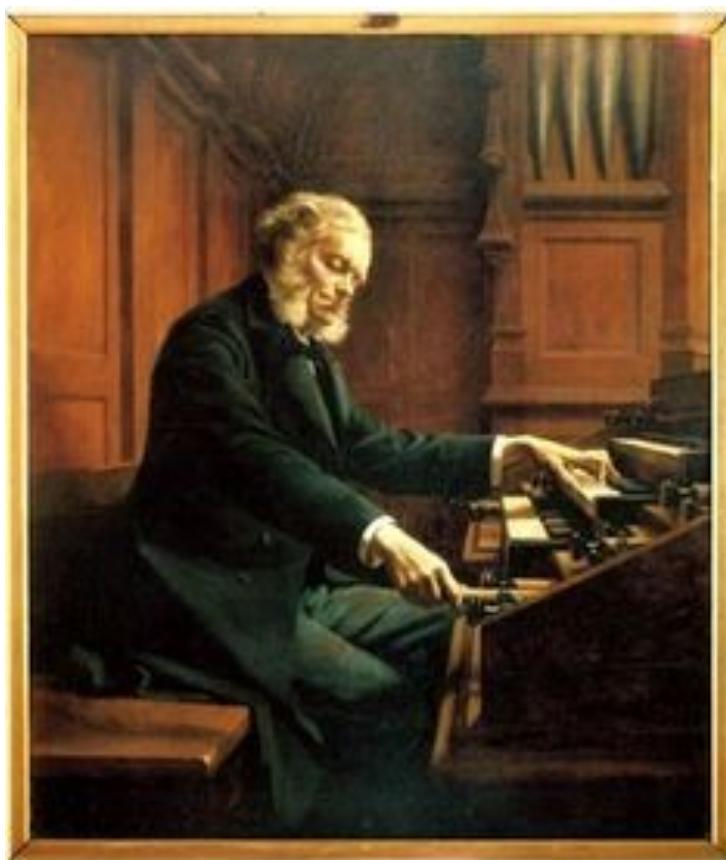


C-A Franck

(1822 - 1890)

Variations Symphoniques (1885)
for piano and orchestra

*Orchestral reduction for Wind Sextet
(Flute, Cor Anglais, Clarinet in A, Horn, Bassoon
and Bass Clarinet) by Toby Miller (2015/2018)*



The composer in his organ loft at the church of Ste Clotilde in Paris, as painted by
Jeanne Rongier in 1885

César Franck's life was one of constant hard work (a standard working day during term was from 6am to 10pm, of which only a couple of hours was for his own composition). His first and biggest battle was to live up to his father's expectations. Nicolas-Joseph was a bank clerk in Liège, whose ambitions were expressed through his children right from birth: he saddled his eldest son with the name César-Auguste-Jean-Guillaume-Hubert. A name more inappropriate for this meek child is hard to imagine: Liszt, who made strenuous efforts on Franck's behalf, later wrote in a letter of introduction "he has the problem of being called César-Auguste, and besides, seems not to me to possess that fortunate social sense that opens all doors". I hazard a guess that, if born today, César would have been diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome.

Once father found that sons did have musical talent, exploiting it for financial reward became his life-long focus (think Leopold Mozart, only far worse). In 1834, aged 11, César played before the first King of the new Belgian nation (also Leopold). The family moved to Paris and took French nationality so that César could enter the Conservatoire, then moved back again in 1842 before he completed the course, possibly because study was reducing the time he could devote to concerts and teaching. Two years later this was not producing the desired results and they were back in Paris, where his father attempted to prevent him spending time with a pupil, his future wife, by emotional blackmail ('his mother would be the one to suffer' from loss of income). As soon as he was 25 and able to marry without parental consent, César left home with a note vowing to pay off every penny of his father's 11,000-franc debt.

Three successive church organist posts helped César both pay his way and avoid the limelight. Organ-playing was in an astonishing Dark Age in France. Baroque music was rarely heard, instruments and playing technique so poor that pedals were mostly unused or not available, their use even forgotten (re-demonstrated by a German organist at a Paris concert in 1844). Despite never fully mastering pedal skills himself (he bought a Pleyel pedal-board for home practice), Franck gradually became, with his friend the great organ-builder Aristide Cavaillé-Coll, founder of a new school of French organ-playing – including the art of improvisation, long dormant in France, where his powers astonished his contemporaries and drew many listeners.

1872 was a turning point in his life. Thanks to whom, nobody was sure either then or now, Franck was appointed organ professor at the Conservatoire. Here, despite his unsystematic teaching, his virtuosity, passion for his subject and his sincerity attracted a growing number of pupil fans, who became known as 'la bande à Franck': d'Indy (their leader), Chausson, Duparc, Vierne and others. This, and Franck's habit of teaching composition in his organ classes, aroused other professors' jealousy.

Franck heard Wagner's 'Tristan' Prelude for the first time in 1874; chromaticism and constant modulation became hallmarks of his own style. Franck also now seems for the first time to have found something personal to compose about: a real passion, apparently quite at odds with his serene and almost childlike character, suddenly emerges in his Piano Quintet. After its première in 1879, pianist and dedicatee Saint-Saëns walked out in protest at the music's naked emotion: Franck probably had his Irish pupil Augusta Holmes (who was apparently lusted after by 'everybody' at the Conservatoire) in mind. Franck's wife was also outraged. There is no evidence of any transgressions of his firm Catholic faith, but "much of Franck's behaviour, his lengthy work day, his working holidays, his unconscious use of sensual harmonies and consciously amatory creations like Psyché, speak of a man whose marriage was not fulfilling." (Chris Dench, reviewing the excellent recent biography by R J Stove). If Franck was on the autistic spectrum, perhaps he simply didn't really grow up emotionally until his fifties. That may also help explain his failure to understand the politics at the Conservatoire, and his ability to ignore the general critical and public hostility to his music.

César Franck died on 8th November 1890 (from a viral infection which turned to pleurisy) following an accident in July when he suffered a head injury in a collision of horse-drawn vehicles on a Paris street. Much of his final decade was taken up with the composition of two operas which have not stood the test of time. Yet all the few masterpieces for which he is still remembered today were produced in that short period: *Prélude, Choral et Fugue* (1884) and *Prélude, Aria et Final* (1886-7) for piano, the Violin Sonata (1886), the D minor Symphony (1887-8), the String Quartet (1889) and the 3 *Chorals* for organ, to which he was putting the final touches at his death. To these we can add symphonic poems *Le Chasseur Maudit*, *Psyché* (with chorus) and *Les Djinns* (with piano) - and these *Variations Symphoniques*, which arose from the success of *Les Djinns*, as a 'thank you' to the pianist Louis Diémer. The symphony is a powerful piece, but even the composer acknowledged later that he would now have orchestrated it differently. No such criticism can be made of the *Variations Symphoniques*, which feature chamber-like dialogue between soloist and accompaniment throughout: beginning as a 'dispute', as in the 2nd movement of Beethoven's 4th piano concerto (a model which can also be sensed in the opening of the Piano Quintet and last movement of the String Quartet). The piece has an unusual but very effective structure: an overall song (ABA') form, in which a despairing first theme (A) descending the harmonic minor scale is transformed at the end into a major-scale celebration (A'). These frame a second theme (B) with several variations, of which the last is a dreamy rhapsody, like a 'slow movement'.

Symphonic Variations for piano and orchestra

Score (accompaniment only,
at instrumental pitches)

Orchestral reduction for Wind Sextet by Toby Miller

Franck

poco rall.

A

poco allegro

Bn/BCI to fore till B

poco rall.

A

poco allegro

Bn/BCI to fore till B

mp

sf

p

mp

sf

pp

pp

pp

pp

pp

mf

pp

p

> pp

mp

molto dim.

crescendo

mf

ff

mf

ff

mf

f

ff

B L'istesso tempo

[pizz.]

pp

mp

pp

mp

sfp

pp

mp

pp

pp

p

sfp

pp

mp

v

v

v

v

pp

mp

v

v

v

v

sfp

v

40

C poco più lento 14

pp

pp

14

pp

14

pp

14

mp p pp

14

p pp

rall. piano

D Allegro

p

sfp sfp pp

3 3 3 3

pp

3 3 3 3

sfp sfp p

sol

mf marcato sfp

sfp sfp p

Musical score for page 68:

- Staff 1:** Treble clef, key signature of two sharps. Dynamics: $b\text{p}$, hp , p , p , p .
- Staff 2:** Treble clef, key signature of three sharps. Measures 3, 4, 5, 6 marked with '3'. Dynamics: sfp , sfp .
- Staff 3:** Treble clef, key signature of one sharp. Measures 3, 4, 5, 6 marked with '3'. Dynamics: p .
- Staff 4:** Treble clef, key signature of one sharp. Dynamics: sfp , sfp , pp .
- Bass Staff:** Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. Dynamics: f più marcato.

Musical score for page 72:

- Staff 1:** Treble clef, key signature of two sharps. Dynamics: f , ff .
- Staff 2:** Treble clef, key signature of three sharps. Measures 3, 4, 5, 6 marked with '3'. Dynamics: p , f .
- Staff 3:** Treble clef, key signature of one sharp. Dynamics: f , ff .
- Staff 4:** Treble clef, key signature of two sharps. Dynamics: f , $< >$, f .
- Staff 5:** Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. Dynamics: f .
- Staff 6:** Treble clef, key signature of three sharps. Dynamics: f .

76

E

più lento

GP

piano

ff

mf

ff

mf

ff

mf

ff

mf

ff

mf

Musical score for orchestra, page 82, measures 1-5. The score consists of five staves:

- Measure 1:** Treble clef, 2/4 time, key signature of two sharps. Dynamics: **p**. Articulation: accents on the first note of each group. Measure start: più allegro.
- Measure 2:** Treble clef, 2/4 time, key signature of two sharps. Measure end: più lento.
- Measure 3:** Treble clef, 2/4 time, key signature of two sharps. Measure start: più allegro.
- Measure 4:** Bass clef, 2/4 time, key signature of one sharp. Measure start: rall. poco a poco piano.
- Measure 5:** Bass clef, 2/4 time, key signature of one sharp. Measure start: **p**.

Rehearsal marks: 2, 2, 2, 2, 2.

**Allegretto
quasi Andante**

91 *poco rall-----a tempo*
(echo) 15 piano

pp *p* *mp* *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *pp* *pp* *f* *mp* *espressivo* *mp* *espressivo* *mp* *pp*

15 **15** **15** **15** **15** **15** **15** **15** **15** **15** **15** **15** **15**

116 **F** *(Fl leading ♫)* *(piano)*

mf *espressivo* *mp* *simile* *p*
pp *p* *pp* *p*
p *pp* *p*
p *pp* *p*

126

*molto sostenuto**f**pp**f**p**pp**pp**f**p**p**mf**p*

134

G

*pp**poco cresc.**dolce molto cantabile**pp**poco cresc.**pp**p poco cresc.*

8

pp dolce molto cantabile

143 *dolce cantabile*

mf

pp < > < > *pp*

pp < > < > *pp*

pp < > < > *pp*

dolce molto cantabile

p

pp

rall. **H** *a tempo* [pizz.]

mf

p =

mf

f

mf

v.

f

p =

mf

f

p

mf

f

f

v.

Sheet music for orchestra, page 162-169. The score consists of six staves. Measure 162 (measures 1-6) starts with a forte dynamic (f) in the top staff, followed by dynamic markings *mp*, *mf*, and *f*. Measures 163-164 show eighth-note patterns with dynamics *p*, *mp*, *mf*, and *f*. Measure 165 begins with a piano dynamic (*p*) and ends with a forte dynamic (*f*). Measure 166 starts with a piano dynamic (*p*) and ends with a forte dynamic (*ff*). Measure 167 (measures 7-12) features eighth-note patterns with dynamics *p* and *f*. Measure 168 (measures 13-18) shows eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 169 (measures 19-24) features eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 170 (measures 25-30) shows eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 171 (measures 31-36) features eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 172 (measures 37-42) shows eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 173 (measures 43-48) features eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 174 (measures 49-54) shows eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 175 (measures 55-60) features eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 176 (measures 61-66) shows eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 177 (measures 67-72) features eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 178 (measures 73-78) shows eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 179 (measures 79-84) features eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 180 (measures 85-90) shows eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 181 (measures 91-96) features eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 182 (measures 97-102) shows eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 183 (measures 103-108) features eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 184 (measures 109-114) shows eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 185 (measures 115-120) features eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 186 (measures 121-126) shows eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 187 (measures 127-132) features eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 188 (measures 133-138) shows eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 189 (measures 139-144) features eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 190 (measures 145-150) shows eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 191 (measures 151-156) features eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.* Measure 192 (measures 157-162) shows eighth-note patterns with dynamics *ff* and *v.*

175

J

3 3

3 3

181

187

193

K

mp crescendo

f

mp crescendo

pp crescendo

f

crescendo

3 3 3 3

p crescendo

f

#d. crescendo

201

diminuendo molto

L

ff 3 **pp**

f 3 **pp**

ff 3 **pp**

f 3 **pp**

ff 3 **pp**

f 3 **pp**

209

mp

pp

pp

p

pp

pp

216

pp *p fp* < > *fp*

pp *fp* < > *pp* *mp*

mp

p < > *pp*

pp *fp* *pp* *pp*

pp *fp* *pp* *mp*

pp express.

(BCL solo, with piano)

molto rall. [M] Molto più lento

pp

pp

p

pp

sostenuto

8

p

simile

N

(Bn gently to fore)

248

N

(Bn gently to fore)

ppp *mf*

ppp *mf*

ppp *mf*

con sord. *ppp* *mp*

espress. *pp* *mf*

pp

(BCl gently to fore)

259

(BCl gently to fore)

>*ppp* *f*

>*ppp* *f*

>*ppp* *f*

>*ppp*

>*ppp* *f*

mute out

>*ppp* *f*

pp *f*

271

(Bn)

O

smorzando

pp

pp

pp

senza sord.

pp

ppp

p

pp

Allegro non troppo $\text{♩} = 80$

(piano) *tr*

(Hn gently to fore)

ppp

pp

ppp

pp

p

ppp

pp

pp

pp

crescendo

292

crescendo

p

p

p

(Bn Bcl
to fore)

P

mp

mf

f

mf

f

mf

f

mf

f

mf

f

307

f < *p*

f < < *p*

f < < < < *pp*

p

f < < *p*

p — *f*

Q

Musical score for page 323, featuring six staves of music for various instruments. The staves include treble, bass, and alto clefs. Dynamic markings include *p*, *mf*, *f*, and crescendos. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth note patterns.

Musical score for page 329, featuring six staves of music for various instruments. The staves include treble, bass, and alto clefs. Dynamic markings include *pp*, *molto cresc.*, *ff*, and *ff*. A box labeled "R" is present in the upper staff.

335

343

poco cresc.

S

pp

p

mp *pp*

p

346

pp

p

pp

Musical score for measures 350-352:

- Measure 350:** Treble clef, common time. Measures start with eighth-note rests followed by eighth-note patterns. Dynamics: *pp*.
- Measure 351:** Treble clef, common time. Measures start with eighth-note patterns followed by eighth-note patterns. Dynamics: *pp*.
- Measure 352:** Bass clef, common time. Measures start with eighth-note patterns followed by eighth-note patterns.

Musical score for measures 353-355:

- Measure 353:** Treble clef, common time. Measures start with eighth-note patterns followed by eighth-note patterns. Dynamics: *cresc.*, *f*.
- Measure 354:** Bass clef, common time. Measures start with eighth-note patterns followed by eighth-note patterns. Dynamics: *f*, *p*.
- Measure 355:** Bass clef, common time. Measures start with eighth-note patterns followed by eighth-note patterns. Dynamics: *f*, *p*, *f*, *mp*.

Musical score for page 357. The score consists of six staves:

- Staff 1 (Treble Clef): Rests.
- Staff 2 (Treble Clef): Rests.
- Staff 3 (Treble Clef): A dotted quarter note followed by two eighth notes. Dynamics: *mp*.
- Staff 4 (Treble Clef): A dotted quarter note followed by a sixteenth-note pattern: (B, A, G, F#), (E, D, C, B), (A, G, F#, E). The staff ends with a repeat sign.
- Staff 5 (Bass Clef): A dotted quarter note followed by a sixteenth-note pattern: (D, C, B, A), (G, F#, E, D), (D, C, B, A).
- Staff 6 (Treble Clef): Sixteenth-note patterns: (G, F#, E, D), (G, F#, E, D). The staff ends with a repeat sign.

Musical score for page 362. The score consists of eight staves:

- Staff 1 (Treble Clef): Rests.
- Staff 2 (Treble Clef): A sixteenth-note pattern: (B, A, G, F#), (E, D, C, B), (A, G, F#, E). Dynamics: *cresc.*
- Staff 3 (Treble Clef): A sixteenth-note pattern: (B, A, G, F#), (E, D, C, B), (A, G, F#, E). Dynamics: *ff*.
- Staff 4 (Bass Clef): Rests.
- Staff 5 (Bass Clef): Rests.
- Staff 6 (Bass Clef): Rests.
- Staff 7 (Treble Clef): Sixteenth-note patterns: (D, C, B, A), (G, F#, E, D), (D, C, B, A). Dynamics: *f*.
- Staff 8 (Treble Clef): Sixteenth-note patterns: (D, C, B, A), (G, F#, E, D), (D, C, B, A). Dynamics: *ff* (*non legato*).
- Staff 9 (Bass Clef): Sixteenth-note patterns: (D, C, B, A), (G, F#, E, D), (D, C, B, A). Dynamics: *f*.
- Staff 10 (Bass Clef): Sixteenth-note patterns: (D, C, B, A), (G, F#, E, D), (D, C, B, A). Dynamics: *ff*.
- Staff 11 (Treble Clef): Sixteenth-note patterns: (D, C, B, A), (G, F#, E, D), (D, C, B, A). Dynamics: *f*.
- Staff 12 (Treble Clef): Sixteenth-note patterns: (D, C, B, A), (G, F#, E, D), (D, C, B, A).

un pochettino ritenuto

T

367

8

8

8

8

(10)

(11)

(12)

(13)

(14)

(1)

cresc.

8

Tempo 1 [or a little faster]

(piano cont. in 6/4) (Fl to fore)

(CA to fore)

383

pp

pp

mf

pp

(2)

(3)

(4)

f

pp

390

(Cl to fore) U

390

(Cl to fore) U

pp *mf* *cresc.*
f *mp* *f*

p *f* *f*

p *mp* *f*

p *mf* *f* *f*

mp *f*

397

V

397

ff *p molto cresc.* *ff* *mf* — *ff*
ff *p molto cresc.* *ff* — *ff* *mf* — *ff*
ff *f* — *ff* *ff* *mf* — *ff*
ff *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

ff *p molto cresc.* *ff* *ff*, *ff* *mf* — *ff*

ff *ff* *ff*, *ff* *ff* *ff*

ff *f* — *ff* *ff* *f* — *ff*

407

2

pp

p

mf

pp

mf

pp

mf

p

mf

pp

417

pp

molto cresc.

p

pp

molto cresc.

p

pp

molto cresc.

p

pp

molto cresc.

p

pp

molto cresc.

f

423

W

433

pp

pp

pp

pp sempre

pp

pp

X

cresc. molto

pp

p

pp

p

pp

mf

[*arco*]

p

[*arco*]

mf

Musical score for orchestra, page 141, measures 1-6. The score consists of six staves. Measures 1-3 show woodwind entries with dynamic markings *ff*. Measure 4 features a prominent bassoon line with a dynamic *ff*. Measures 5-6 show a transition to a lower key signature of B-flat major, indicated by a key change symbol and the letter 's' at the beginning of the staff.

Musical score for piano, page 10, measures 448-453. The score consists of six staves. Measures 448-450 show treble and bass staves with various note patterns and dynamics (p, p, p). Measure 451 shows a treble staff with a melodic line and dynamic p. Measure 452 shows a treble staff with a melodic line and dynamic p. Measure 453 shows a treble staff with a melodic line and dynamic p.

cresc.

ff

ff

ff

ff

ff

ff