

More About VARIATIONS ON AN IRISH HYMN TUNE

There are several other compositions based on this famous tune out there on the market, but most are geared to grade 2 or 3 bands. This one is a notch more challenging.

I personally consider this to be one of my very best efforts in the concert band medium, but since it's published in Ireland, it doesn't get much attention on this side of the pond. Please give it a look and listen to the recording by the Washington Wind Symphony on the audio track.

Loosely modeled on Chance's **Variations on a Korean Folk Song**. The theme is the familiar hymn tune *Slane*, which was itself derived from an Irish folk song (by far the best known hymn which uses this tune is **Be Thou My Vision**). It is played first in a setting of its familiar form below an ostinato suggesting Irish penny-whistles. That is followed by seven variations and an extended finale featuring an "Irish jig" over a repeating ground bass, with a brass chorale coming in between the two--all played without pause.

There are exposed solos for piccolo and alto sax.