Eòlas nan Ribheid

(The Wisdom of the Reeds)

CONCERTINO
for
CLARINET and ORCHESTRA

William Sweeney
2016

Commissioned by BBC Radio 3 and first performed by the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Thomas Dausgaard with soloist Yann Ghiro on 9th December 2017 at the City Halls, Glasgow.

ORCHESTRA

Piccolo
Flutes 1, 2
Oboes 1, 2
Clarinets 1, 2 in Bb
Bassoons 1, 2
Contra-Bassoon

Trumpets 1, 2, 3 in C
Trombones 1, 2
Bass-Trombone

3 Percussion:
2 Tam-tams (high, low), 3 Metal plates (tuned Eb, Bb, Cb), Vibraphone, Glockenspiel, Tubular Bells, 2 Cabasas (high, low), 2 Suspended Cymbals, Bass Drum (Orch.), Bass Drum (foot-pedal).

Cimbalom
Piano

Clarinet Solo in B♭

Violins 1, 2
Violas
Cellos
Basses

Performance Notes:

The title, "Eòlas nan Ribheid" was suggested by my friend and collaborator, the gaelic poet, Aonghas MacNeacail. It could be translated as "The Wisdom of the Reeds", and might be thought of as a dream in which one of the great piobaireachd players meets Johnny Hodges in some ante-room of the after-life and they trade phrases interwoven with their memories; but the dreamer has also supplied items from his own back-catalogue of phrases from Weber, Brahms and from his own imagination.

The piece contrasts styles: amongst others, the incisive directness of piobaireachd, Weber's "clarinet-as-romantic-hero" and Hodges' oblique and heartfelt expressive mastery. It reflects on different ways of playing the clarinet, my memories of learning to play and the fascination of some phrases, their shapes and colours.
A few years ago, I encountered the work of the great Sudanese artist Ibrahim El-Salahi at Tate Modern. In particular his work "Reborn Sounds of Childhood Dreams", with its strongly etched, but ambiguously shadowed figures, suggested the possibility of musical processes; not technical parallels exactly, but the suggestion that what may be drawn from dreams, of remembered dreams, has to be reborn, re-defined, woven anew in the present.
Basic tone-colour is of course a matter for each player's taste and upbringing, but I hope to cause no offence by stressing some specifics.

At letters A, E and F, the tone production must be bagpipe- (or organ-) like, the air pressure sustained steadily throughout each note and phrase without shading or "rounding-off", and also through the rests, which should be produced solely by the action of the tongue stopping the airflow, then releasing it. (This is also the technique Kell shows us in his studies on staccato).

Other passages (C, D, K) are marked with detailed dynamics and shading, requiring greater flexibility of air-flow and subtlety of articulation, but the player should aim for the *effect* indicated by these marks and adjust the actual execution in the light of their own technique and sense of narrative. At least one passage (B) is simply marked "*poco meno f*", but also "*molto espressivo*", so that the player should find appropriate shadings of dynamics and timbre for themselves.
Armed with these distinctions, the player will (the composer hopes!) develop their own technical strategies through the introductory bars, linking passages and cadenza.

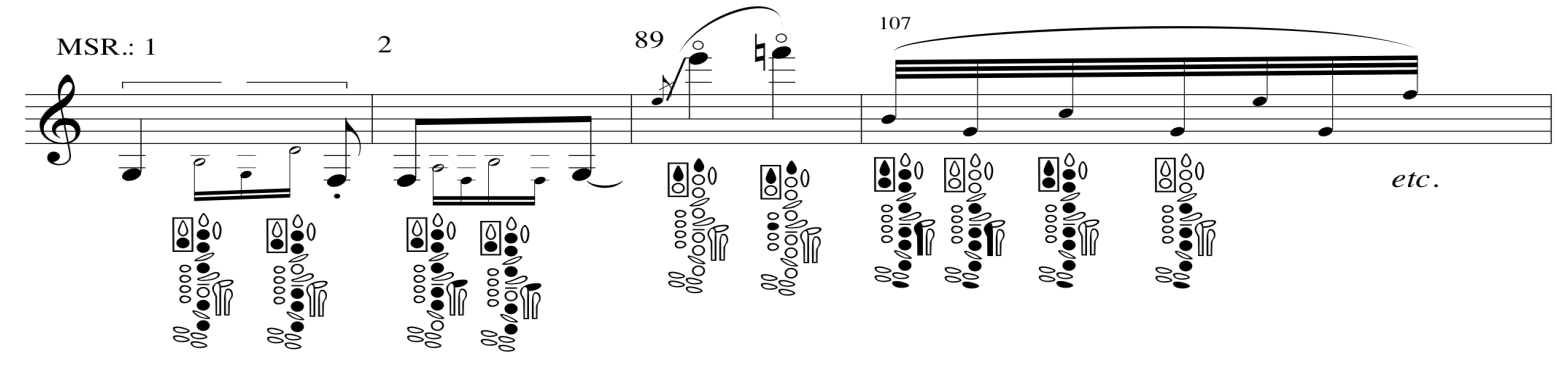
Use, or avoidance of, vibrato is a matter, again, of each player's style and preferences, but the composer would simply ask for its deployment to be varied according to expressive purpose rather than as a coat of timbral varnish over everything. The example of Hodges (and Kell in his 1930s recording of the Brahms Quintet) can be helpful here, as they also should be in approaching the interpretation of legato. The standard notation of slurs and glissandi might seem to indicate a uniform treatment, but I would urge the player to deploy a wide range of variants: from clear finger 'pops' through smooth 'tenuto' to varied degrees of 'portamento' up to full glissandi.

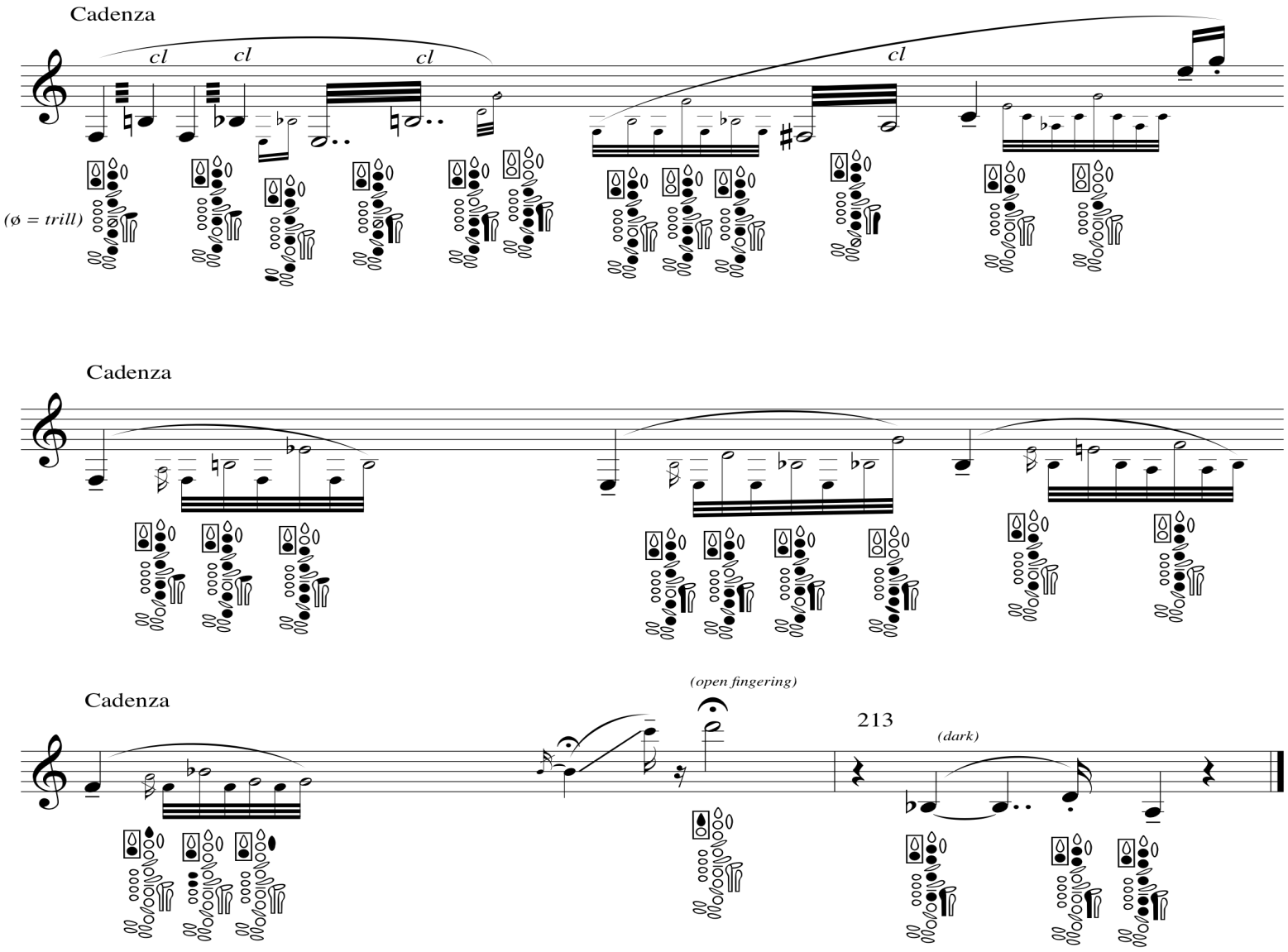
Some fingerings are suggested overleaf not only for swift execution of the extended groups of grace-notes, but also to bring out varieties of pitch and timbre.

The work is also dedicated to the memory of Alan Hacker (1938 - 2012), my guide, philosopher of the clarinet and friend.

http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/el-salahi-reborn-sounds-of-childhood-dreams-i-t13979
http://www.piobaireachd.co.uk
Johnny Hodges: Duke Ellington's lead alto saxophonist.
"Blood Count": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_o7RBW-T_Cc

In memory of Alan Hacker (1938 - 2012)





Molto Lento ♩ = 36

Piccolo

Flute 1

Flute 2

Oboe 1

Oboe 2

B♭ Clarinet 1

B♭ Clarinet 2

Bassoon 1

Bassoon 2

Contrabassoon

mf

mf

Trumpet 1 in C

Trumpet 2 in C

Trumpet 3 in C

Trombone 1

Trombone 2

Bass Trombone

Tam-tam

Metal plates

Percussion

ppp *ppp* *ppp* *l.v.*

ppp *ppp* *ppp* *l.v.*

Vibraphone *bowed* *l.v.*

f

Cimbalom

Piano

Molto Lento ♩ = 36

Solo Clarinet in B♭

ppp *pp* *pp* *pp* *mp* *pp* *pp* *f* *mp* *pp* *ppp* *pp*

Violin 1

Violin 2

mf

mf

Viola

ppp *ppp* *p* *pp*

ppp *ppp* *p* *pp*

Cello

pp *con sord. senza vib., poco sul pont.*

Double Bass

pizz. *arco*

ppp *ppp* *p* *pp*

A **Tempo Giusto** ♩ = 90

Perc. — Tub.Bells — *f*

Pno. — *molto marcato* — *f* — *l.v.* — *l.v. sempre* — Ped.

Solo Cl. — *poco f*

Vl.1 — *con sord.* — *ppp* — *pp* — div. a4

Vln.2 — *con sord.* — *ppp* — *pp* — div. a4

Perc.

Pno.

Solo Cl. — *senza dim.*

Vl.1

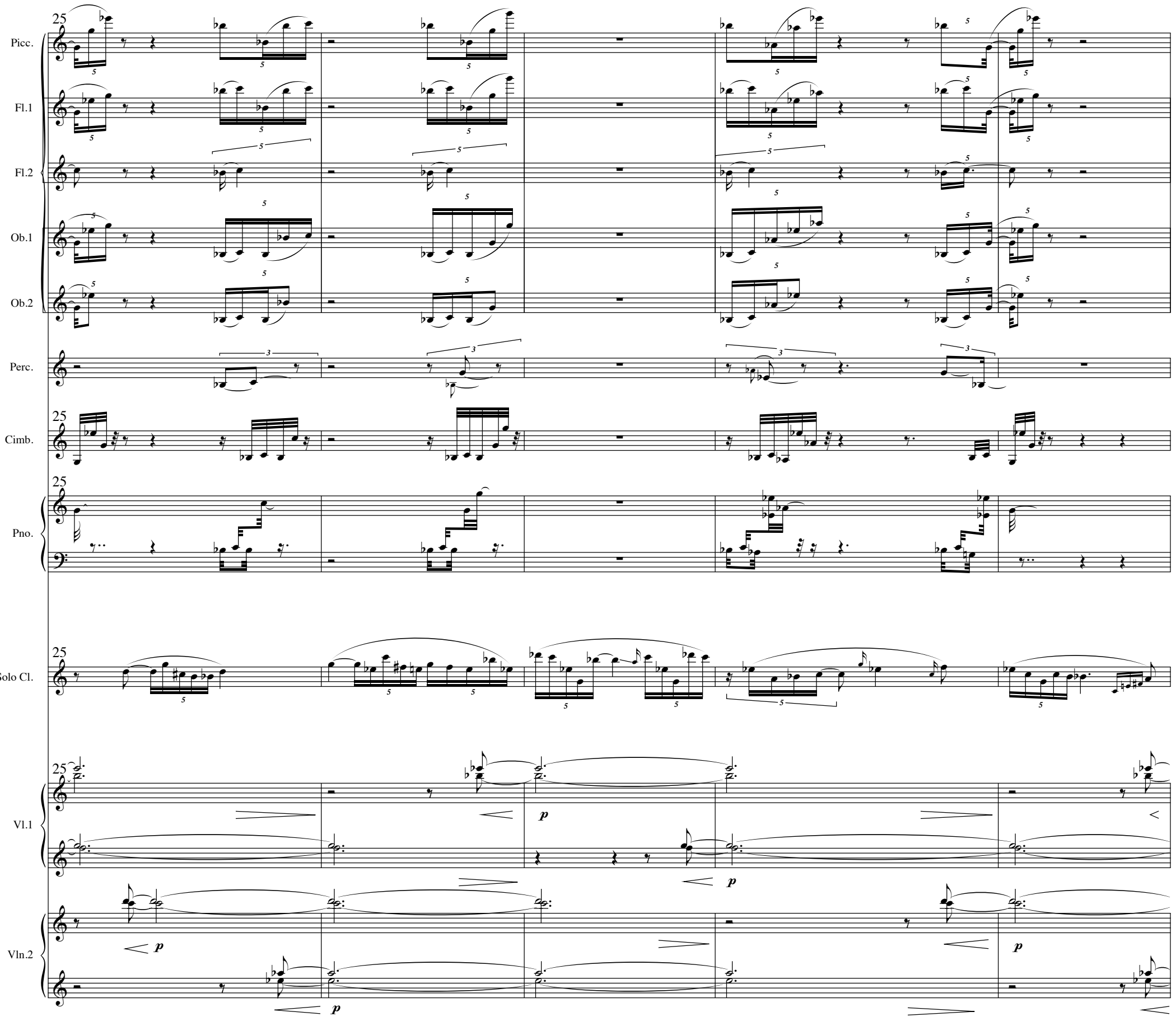
Vln.2

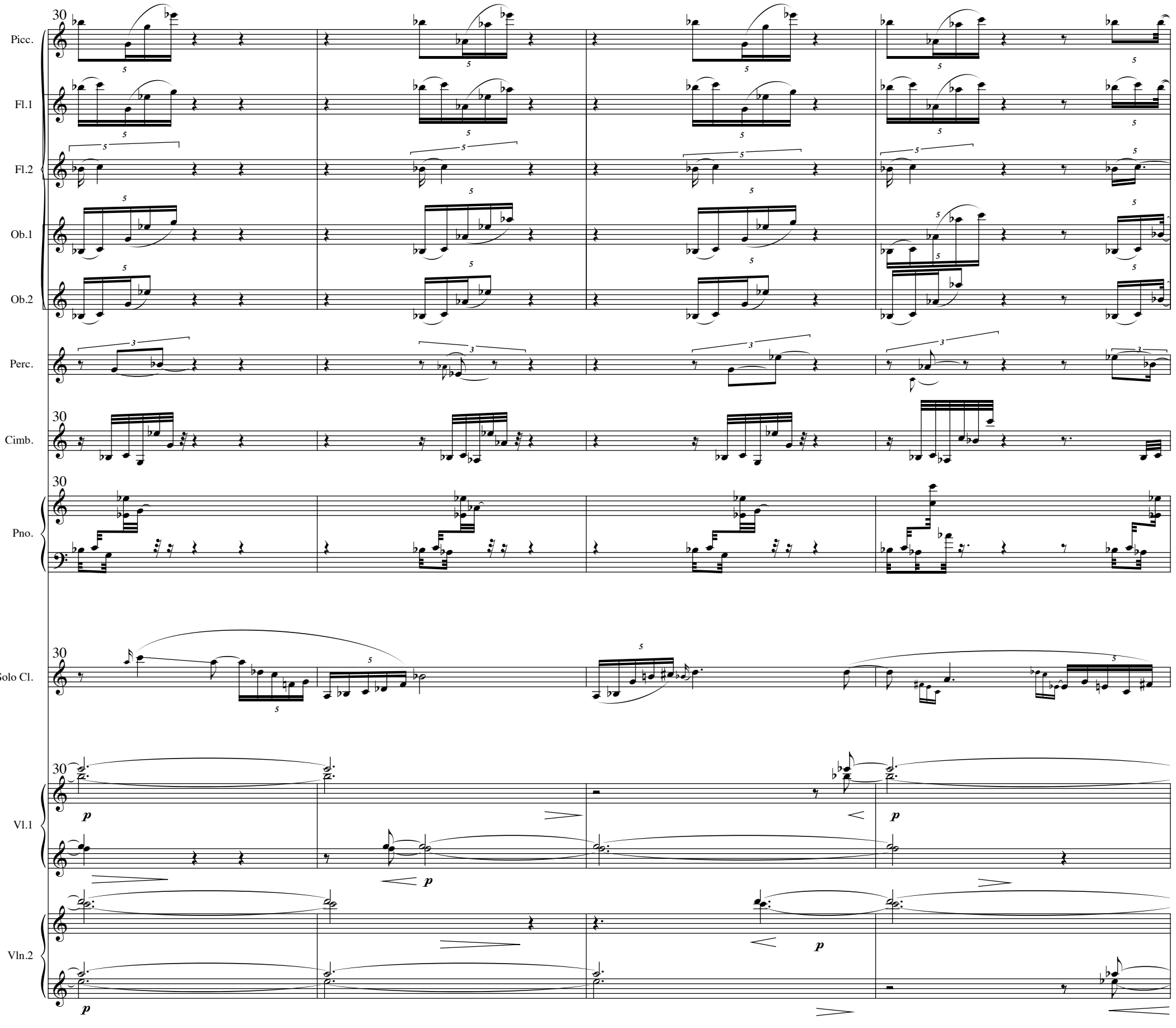
B

20

Picc.
Fl.1
Fl.2
Ob.1
Ob.2
Perc.
Cimb.
Pno.
Solo Cl.
Vl.1
Vln.2

poco marc.
f
mf
l.v. sempre
molto espress.
poco meno f
p
Ped.


25
Picc.
Fl.1
Fl.2
Ob.1
Ob.2
Perc.
Cimb.
Pno.
Solo Cl.
Vl.1
Vln.2
p


30
Picc.
Fl.1
Fl.2
Ob.1
Ob.2
Perc.
Cimb.
Pno.
Solo Cl.
Vl.1
Vln.2
p

C

L'istesso tempo (♩ = 90)

Tempo Rubato

34

Picc.

Fl.1

Fl.2

Ob.1

Ob.2

Bsn.1

Bsn.2

C. Bn.

pp

pp

p

34

Perc.

Tam-tam

ppp

Glock.

pp

Cabasa (low)

p

34

Cimb.

34

Pno.

C

L'istesso tempo (♩ = 90)

Tempo Rubato

34

Solo Cl.

p

34

Vl.1

senza sord.

p

pp

pp

Vln.2

senza sord.

p

pp

Vla.

p

pp

rfz

pp

rfz

Cell.

p

Db.

arco

pizz.

arco

pizz.

p

42

Tempo Giusto

T^{O}R

T^{O}G

Picc.

Fl.1

Fl.2

Ob.1

Ob.2

Bsn.1

Bsn.2

C. Bn.

Perc.

Cimb.

Pno.

Solo Cl.

cantabile

Vl.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Cell.

Db.

arco *pizz.* *arco* *pizz.*

50

T^oR

T^oG poco piú mosso

T^oR

accel.

T^oG

attacca

Fl.1

Fl.2

Ob.1

Ob.2

Bsn.1

Bsn.2

C. Bn.

Perc.

Solo Cl.

Vl.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Cell.

Db.

arco

pizz.

T^O R

T^O G

54

Fl.1

Fl.2

Ob.1

Ob.2

Bsn.1

Bsn.2

C. Bn.

flz.

mf

mp

p

3

Susp.Cymb.

Perc.

Solo Cl.

molto espress.

f

Vl.1

Vln.2

5

pp

Vla.

rfz

Cell.

Db.

arco

pizz.

59

T^O R

T^O G

Picc.

Fl.1

(senza flz.)

Fl.2

(senza flz.)

Ob.1

Ob.2

B♭ Cl.1

B♭ Cl.2

Bsn.1

Bsn.2

C. Bn.

Tbn.2

B. Tbn.

59

T^O R

T^O G

Solo Cl.

59

Vl.1

Vln.2

Vla.

(senza trem).

Cell.

Db.

62

D

Appassionato ♪ = 96

Adagio ♩ = 60

Appo. ♪ = 96

Picc.

Fl.1

Fl.2

Ob.1

Ob.2

B♭ Cl.1

B♭ Cl.2

Bsn.1

Bsn.2

C. Bn.

Tbn.1

Tbn.2

B. Tbn.

D

Appassionato ♪ = 96

Adagio ♩ = 60

Appo. ♪ = 96

Solo Cl.

Vl.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Cell.

Db.

f *ff* *p* *mp* *pp* *molto* *rfz* *sul G* *cantabile, poco portamento*

74

Adagio ♩ = 60 **Appo.** ♪ = 96

Picc.
Fl.1
Fl.2
B♭ Cl.1
B♭ Cl.2
Bsn.1
Bsn.2
C. Bn.
Tbn.1
Tbn.2
B. Tbn.
Pno.
Solo Cl.
Vl.1
Vln.2
Vla.
Cell.
Db.

p *pp* *mp* *ff*

Adagio ♩ = 60

84

Picc.

Fl.1

Fl.2

B♭ Cl.1

B♭ Cl.2

Bsn.1

Bsn.2

C. Bn.

Tbn.1

Tbn.2

B. Tbn.

con sord.

(senza sord.)

(senza sord.)

Pno.

84

Adagio ♩ = 60

Solo Cl.

84

Vl.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Cell.

Db.

90

E **Risoluto** ♩ = 84 - 90

(N.B. in sections E, F, the orchestral tutti should be aligned with the first of the "downbeat" solo grace-note groups)

Picc.

Fl.1

Fl.2

B♭ Cl.1

B♭ Cl.2

Bsn.1

Bsn.2

C. Bn.

p

p

Tbn.1

Tbn.2

con sord.

p

B. Tbn.

con sord.

p

Perc.

Tub.Bells

l.v.

f

90

p

Cabasa (low)

Cimb.

90

l.v.

f

Pno.

90

l.v.

p

f

8vb

Ped.

quasi

etc.

E **Risoluto** ♩ = 84 - 90

Solo Cl.

90

mp

f

Vl.1

90

Vln.2

Vla.

Cell.

Db.

pizz.

p

96

C. Bn.

p

Tbn.2

p

B. Tbn.

p

Perc.

96

p

96

Cimb.

96

Pno.

96

Solo Cl.

Db.

p

101

C. Bn.

Tbn.1

Tbn.2

B. Tbn.

Perc.

101

Cabasa (high)

p *(swung)*

101

Cimb.

101

Pno.

101

Solo Cl.

101

Vl.1

pizz.

muffle strings

p

(fingers, f/nails or light plectrum)

etc.

Vln.2

pizz.

muffle strings

p

(fingers, f/nails or light plectrum)

etc.

Vla.

pizz.

muffle strings

p

(fingers, f/nails or light plectrum)

etc.

Cell.

pizz.

muffle strings

p

(fingers, f/nails or light plectrum)

etc.

Db.

106

F ♩. = ♩

C. Bn.

Tbn.1

Tbn.2

B. Tbn.

Perc.

106

106

Cimb.

106

Pno.

Ped.

quasi 3:2 7:4 etc. 7:6

F ♩. = ♩

106

Solo Cl.

106

Vl.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Cell.

Db.

senza sord.

f p

l.v.

110

C. Bn.

Tbn.1

Tbn.2

B. Tbn.

110

Perc.

110

Cimb.

110

Pno.

110

Solo Cl.

110

Vl.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Cell.

Db.

114

C. Bn.

Tbn.1

Tbn.2

B. Tbn.

114

Perc.

114

Cimb.

114

Pno.

114

Solo Cl.

114

Vl.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Cell.

Db.

118

G ♩ = ♩.

Fl.1

Fl.2

Ob.1

Ob.2

B♭ Cl.1

B♭ Cl.2

Bsn.1

Bsn.2

C. Bn.

cresc.

f

Tbn.1

f *p*

f *p*

fp

Tbn.2

cresc.

f

B. Tbn.

cresc.

f

118

Perc.

cresc.

f

p

118

Cimb.

118

Pno.

118

Solo Cl.

G ♩ = ♩.

118

Vl.1

cresc.

f

p

Vln.2

cresc.

f

p

Vla.

cresc.

f

p

pp

Cell.

cresc.

f

p

pp

Db.

cresc.

f

123

Fl.1
Fl.2
Ob.1
Ob.2
B♭ Cl.1
B♭ Cl.2
Bsn.1
Bsn.2
C. Bn.
Tbn.1
Tbn.2
B. Tbn.
Perc.
Cimb.
Pno.
Solo Cl.
Vl.1
Vln.2
Vla.
Cell.

mf *pp* *p* *ff* *f* unmeasured

Senza Misura

Senza Misura

128

Fl.1

Fl.2

Ob.1

Ob.2

B♭ Cl.1

B♭ Cl.2

Bsn.1

Bsn.2

128

Cimb.

128

Pno.

Senza Misura

Senza Misura

128

Solo Cl.

128

Vl.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Cell.

H

Appassionato ♪ = 96

131

Fl.1 — *pp*

Fl.2 — *pp*

Ob.1 — *pp*

Ob.2 — *pp*

B♭ Cl.1 — *pp*

B♭ Cl.2 — *pp*

Bsn.1 — *pp*

Bsn.2 — *pp*

131

Cimb. — *f*

131

Pno. — *pp* — *f* — Ped. — ✻

H

Appassionato ♪ = 96

131

Solo Cl. — *pp* — *mp* — *sub. p* — *poco a poco* — *pp* — *f* — *(gliss.)* — *molto*

131

Vl.1 — *arco* *sul G* — *ff*

Vln.2 — *arco* *sul G* — *ff*

Vla. — *arco* *sul G* — *ff*

Cell. — *arco* — *ff*

136

B♭ Cl.1

B♭ Cl.2

Bsn.1

Bsn.2

C. Bn.

B. Tbn.

136

Pno.

molto legato

136

Solo Cl.

136

Vl.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Cell.

Db.

div.

140

B♭ Cl.1

B♭ Cl.2

Bsn.1

Bsn.2

C. Bn.

B. Tbn.

140

Pno.

Ped.

140

Solo Cl.

140

Vl.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Cell.

Db.

148

B♭ Cl.1 — *p* — *pp*

B♭ Cl.2 — *p* — *pp*

Bsn.1 — *p* — *pp*

Bsn.2 — *mf* *mf* *f*

C. Bn. — *mf* *mf* *f*

B. Tbn. — *mf* *mf* *f*

148

Pno. — *mf* — *pp* — Ped. ---*

Cadenza

Ad Lib., ca ♩ = 60

148

Solo Cl. — *f* — *ff* — *pp* — *f* — *f* — *ff* — *f* — *p* — *niente* — *pp*

Db. — *mf* *mf* *f*

Solo Cl. — *p* — *mp* — *pp* — *pp* — *mf* — *p* — *mf* — *pp* — *p* — *mp* — *espress.* — *pp*

Solo Cl. — *espress.* — *mp* — *p* — *pp* — *mf* — *senza dim.* — *ppp* *sub.* — *p* — 3:2 — 6:4 — 3 — 3:2 — *(but at MM=90)*

Solo Cl.

Solo Cl.

Solo Cl.

Solo Cl.

Solo Cl.

Solo Cl.

Piú mosso ♩ = 90

a tempo

I **Maestoso** 𝅗𝅥. = 36 - 40

Picc.
Fl.1
Fl.2
Ob.1
Ob.2
B♭ Cl.1
B♭ Cl.2
Bsn.1
Bsn.2
C. Bn.
Tpt.1
Tpt.2
Tpt.3
Tbn.1
Tbn.2
B. Tbn.
Perc.
Tam-tam (high)
Tam-tam (low)
Bass drum (orch,)
Bass drum (pedal)
Pno.
Solo Cl.
(slow.....quicker)
(open fingering)
Vl.1
Vln.2
Vla.
Cell.
Db.
pizz.
(div.)

154

Picc.
Fl.1
Fl.2
Ob.1
Ob.2
B♭ Cl.1
B♭ Cl.2
Bsn.1
Bsn.2
C. Bn.

154

Tpt.1
Tpt.2
Tpt.3
Tbn.1
Tbn.2
B. Tbn.

154

Perc.

154

Pno.

154

Vl.1
Vln.2
Vla.
Cell.
Db.

f

160

Picc.
Fl.1
Fl.2
Ob.1
Ob.2
B♭ Cl.1
B♭ Cl.2
Bsn.1
Bsn.2
C. Bn.

160

Tpt.1
Tpt.2
Tpt.3
Tbn.1
Tbn.2
B. Tbn.

160

Perc.

Susp.Cymb. *wire brushes*

160

Cimb.

160

Pno.

160

Vl.1

div. a3

Vln.2
Vla.
Cell.
Db.

J

Molto Lento ♩ = 36

167

Picc.

Fl.1

Fl.2

Ob.1

Ob.2

B♭ Cl.1

B♭ Cl.2

Bsn.1

Bsn.2

C. Bn.

Tpt.1

Tpt.2

Tpt.3

B. Tbn.

Perc.

Metal plates

Vibraphone

Cimb.

Solo Cl.

Vl.1

Vln.2

div. a3

Vla.

Db.

pizz.

175

rit.

K **Poco Meno Mosso**

Picc.

Fl.1

Fl.2

Ob.1

Ob.2

B♭ Cl.1

B♭ Cl.2

C. Bn.

Bass drum (pedal)

Perc.

175

Cimb.

Pno.

Solo Cl.

Vl.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Cell.

Db.

p *pp* *ppp* *mp* *sempre* *molto espress.* *pizz.* *(senza tr.)* *l.v.*

180

Picc.
Fl.1
Fl.2
Ob.1
Ob.2
B♭ Cl.1
B♭ Cl.2
Bsn.1
Bsn.2
C. Bn.

pp *et seq.*

180

Tpt.1
Tpt.2
Tpt.3
Tbn.1
Tbn.2
B. Tbn.

pp *con sord.* *et seq.*

180

Susp.Cymb. *l.v.* *et seq.*

Perc.

180

Vibraphone *l.v.* *et seq.*

pp

180

Cimb.

180

Pno.

180

Solo Cl.

mf *pp* *p* *pp*

180

Vl.1
Vln.2

(senza tr.)

Vla.
Cell.
Db.

186

Picc.

Fl.1

Fl.2

Ob.1

Ob.2

B♭ Cl.1

B♭ Cl.2

Bsn.1

Bsn.2

C. Bn.

186

Tpt.1

Tpt.2

Tpt.3

Tbn.1

Tbn.2

B. Tbn.

et seq.

pp

186

Perc.

186

186

Cimb.

186

Pno.

186

Solo Cl.

mp ***mf*** ***pp*** ***p***

186

Vl.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Cell.

Db.

191

Picc.
Fl.1
Fl.2
Ob.1
Ob.2
B♭ Cl.1
B♭ Cl.2
Bsn.1
Bsn.2
C. Bn.

191

Tpt.1
Tpt.2
Tpt.3
Tbn.1
Tbn.2
B. Tbn.

191

Perc.

191

Cimb.

191

Pno.

191

Solo Cl.

mf *f* *ppp* *pp*

191

senza vib.

Vl.1
Vln.2
Vla.
Cell.
Db.

196

Picc.

Fl.1

Fl.2

Ob.1

Ob.2

B♭ Cl.1

B♭ Cl.2

Bsn.1

Bsn.2

C. Bn.

196

Tpt.1

Tpt.2

Tpt.3

Tbn.1

Tbn.2

B. Tbn.

196

Perc.

196

Cimb.

196

Pno.

196

Solo Cl.

p

f

(port.)

sub. ***pp***

pp

196

senza vib.

Vl.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Cell.

Db.

201

Picc.
Fl.1
Fl.2
Ob.1
Ob.2
B♭ Cl.1
B♭ Cl.2
Bsn.1
Bsn.2
C. Bn.

201

Tpt.1
Tpt.2
Tpt.3
Tbn.1
Tbn.2
B. Tbn.

201

Perc.

201

Cimb.

201

Pno.

201

Solo Cl.

201

Vl.1
Vln.2
Vla.
Cell.
Db.

ppp
pp
senza vib.

206

Picc.

Fl.1

Fl.2

Ob.1

Ob.2

B♭ Cl.1

B♭ Cl.2

Bsn.1

Bsn.2

C. Bn.

206

Tpt.1

Tpt.2

Tpt.3

Tbn.1

Tbn.2

B. Tbn.

206

Perc.

206

Cimb.

206

Pno.

206

Solo Cl.

206

Vl.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Cell.

Db.

ppp

pp

L

Poco Piú Mosso ♩ = 48

210

B♭ Cl.1

B♭ Cl.2

pp *mp*

pp

210

Perc.

Metal plates

pp

Tam-tam (low)

ppp

L

Poco Piú Mosso ♩ = 48

210

Solo Cl.

p *pp* *poco* *ppp* *(dark)* *p*

Vla.

poco *rf* *pp* *ppp* *ppp* *pp*

poco *rf* *pp* *ppp* *ppp* *pp*

Cell.

pizz. *pp* *arco* *pp*

Db.

pizz. *pp* *arco* *pp*