NIBIRU

Ka Hei Cheng

ABSTRACT

Mikel Kuehn, Advisor

Nibiru is an eight-minute piece for chamber orchestra, scored for flute (piccolo), oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, trumpet, trombone, harp, percussion, two violins, two violas, two celli and double bass. It is a sonic portrayal of a hypothetically existing planet, Nibiru, which would orbit the sun every 3,600 years according to the research findings of the scientist Zecharia Sitchin (1920-2010). The abstract musical narrative of the piece describes the sparkles of encounters between the earth and the legendary Nibiru, which conjures thoughts about the origins of Homo sapiens and the historical significance of the Enlightenment period in human evolutionary history. In creating this piece for chamber orchestra, I use pointillistic writing, juxtaposition of texture and timbral exploration to portray the space travel of the Nephilim to the planet Earth. Clouds of colors are interwoven together and undergo gradual or sudden transitions between one and another, so as to give more focus to the harmonic content. The combination of extended techniques enriches the timbral exploration by expanding the harmonic colors. The juxtaposition of ascending and descending lines among different instruments contributes to the overall dramatic growth of the piece.

PERFORMANCE INSTRUCTIONS

Instrumentation

1 flute (piccolo)

1 oboe

1 clarinet

1 bassoon

1 F horn

1 C trumpet

1 trombone

1 harp

1 percussionist

Instruments: vibraphone, chimes, medium tam-tam, crotales [upper set], Glockenspiel, Mark tree, medium suspended cymbal

Implements: 2 medium cord, 1 bow, chime hammer

2 violins I (A = outside, B = inside)

2 violins II

2 violas

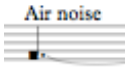
2 celli

1 double bass

Notation Conventions

General

- Accidentals use the conventional method; cautionary accidentals are included for ease of reading
- All trills are to be played up one semitone unless other specification indicated
- Tremoli should always be played as fast as possible
- All glissandi should start immediately at the beginning of the note value
- An arrow indicates the gradual change from one sound or one performance directive to another
- *l.v. laissez vibrer* (allow to sound as long as possible)
- Air noise indicates an exhale through instrument without producing a specific pitch. Any fingering may be used that blends well with the texture
-

  cresc. or *decresc.* from/to *niente* or as soft as possible
- 

  The square note head indicates air noise

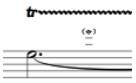
Flute

○ indicates breath tone: mixture of breathy sound and given pitch

● indicates normal tone

Strings

- Violin IA = 1st stand outside player; violin IB = 1st stand inside player
- SP = sul ponticello
- ST = sul tasto
- N = normale (used with S.P. and S.T.)



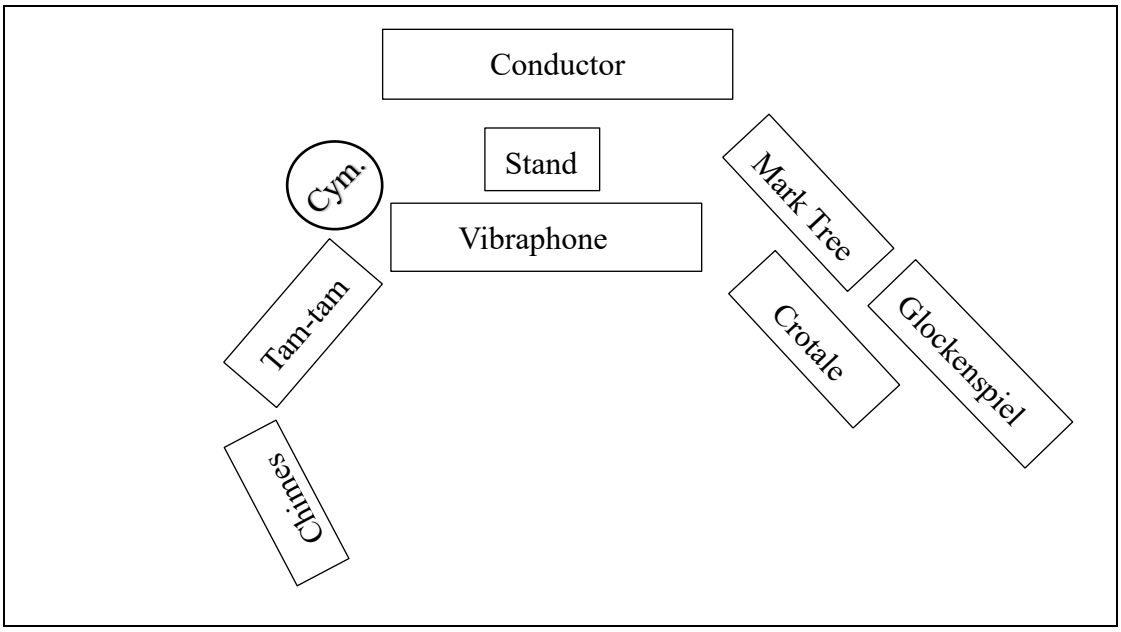
- Harmonic trills are produced by alternating the finger pressure between normal and light, so as to achieve the result of alternating normal and harmonic sounds.

- When playing long sustained notes that need more than one bow, bow changes should be unsynchronized between players (i.e., staggered). During slurs which include several long and sustained notes, a change of note should preferably not coincide with a change of bow.

Brass

- Harmon/Bubble mute should be used unless other specification indicated.

Percussion



Harp

Circular glissando. Play continuous overlapping, circular glissandi between the destination pitches for the duration of the note value. Gliss. up or down according to the direction of the glissando.

Harp sounds should always be allowed to ring as long as possible.
Harp harmonics sound an octave higher than written.

The score is notated in C. Piccolo, double bass, crotales, and glockenspiel use the usual octave transpositions.

Score in C

Nibiru

Cheng Ka Hei

Mysterious, with curiosity ♩ = 60

Flute
Air noise
ord.
senza vibr.
molto vibr.
(alternate between quarter tone sharp and flat)

Oboe
Air noise
senza vibr.
Air noise

Clarinet
Air noise
molto vibr.
Air noise

Bassoon
Air noise

Horn
Straight mute

C Trumpet
Bubble mute

Trombone
Bubble mute

Percussion
♩ = 60
Vib.: bow *l.v. sempre*

Harp
l.v. sempre

Violin IA
ST → N
♩ = 60

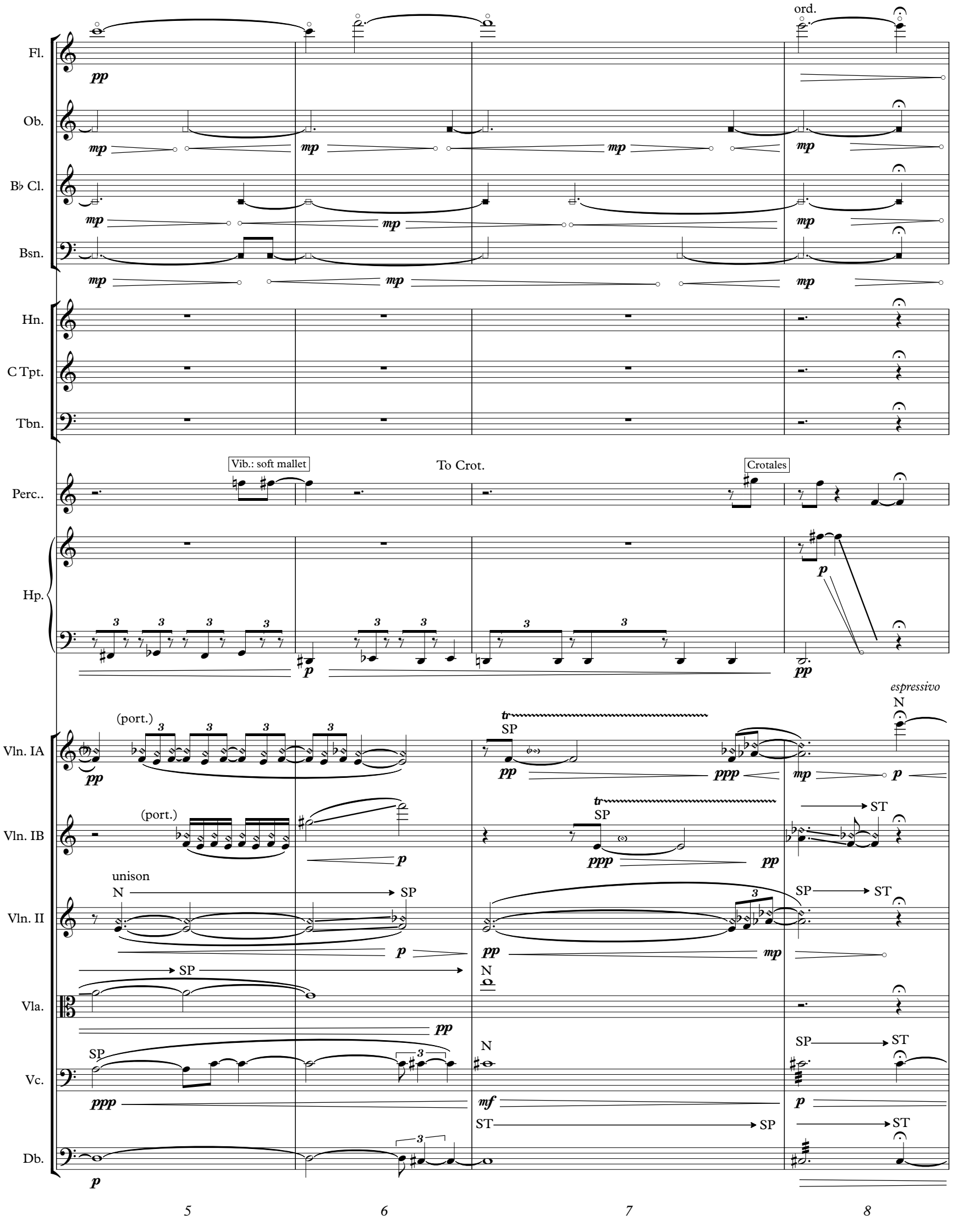
Violin IB
ST

Violin II
ST
solo

Viola
N

Violoncello
SP
III. ST
arco

Double Bass
pizz.


ord.
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Perc..
Vib.: soft mallet
To Crot.
Crotales
Hp.
espressivo
N
(port.)
Vln. IA
Vln. IB
unison
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.
SP
ST
5
6
7
8

A

(alternate between quarter tone sharp and flat)

Fl.

pp

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

C Tpt.

Tbn.

Perc.

(Crotales)

pp

p

mp

(E)

p

mf

Hp.

mp

molto vibrato

Vln. IA

f

mf

f

molto vibrato

N II(E)

Vln. IB

pp *mp*

ppp *p* *pp*

espressivo

N

Vln. II

pp

Vla.

N

pp

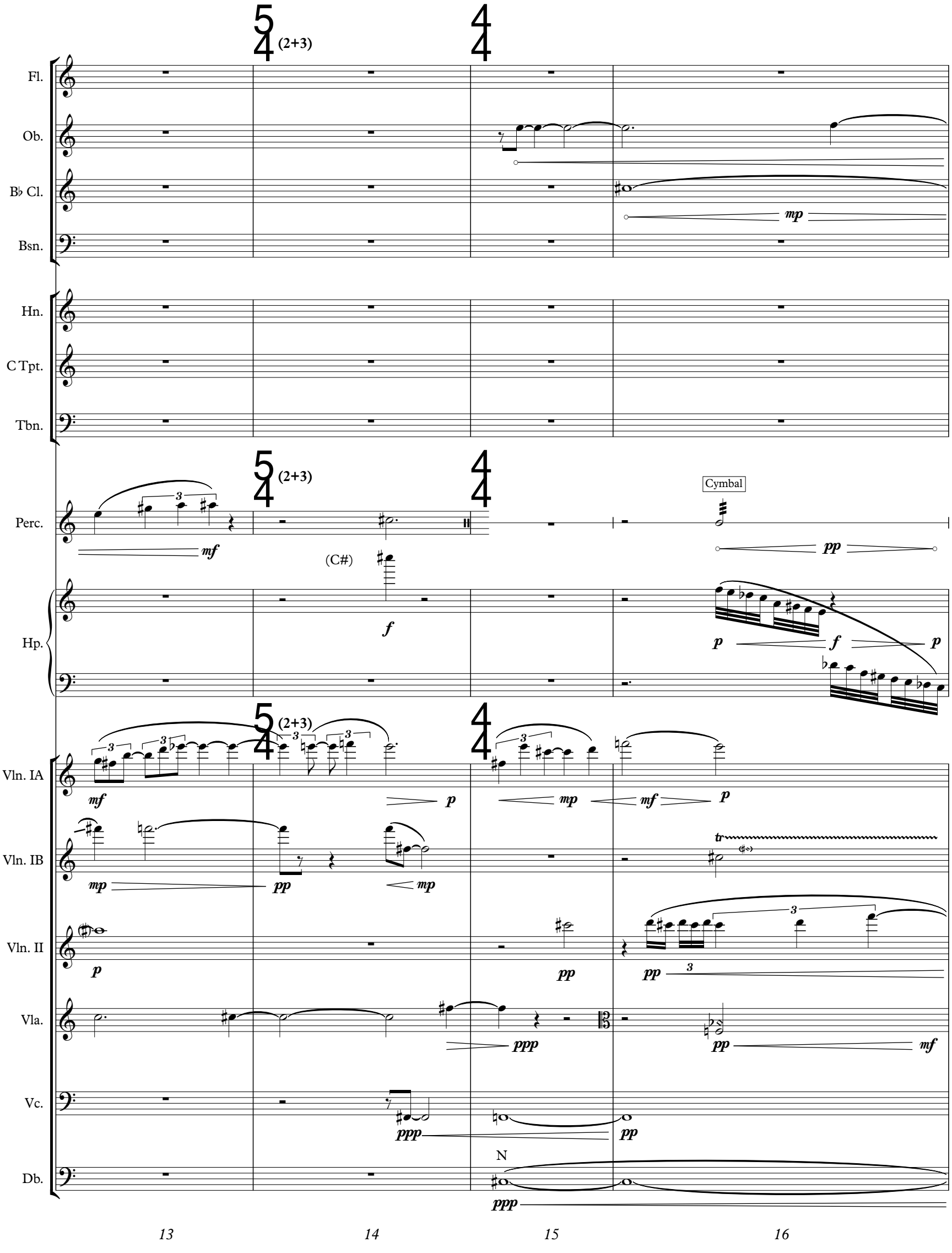
N

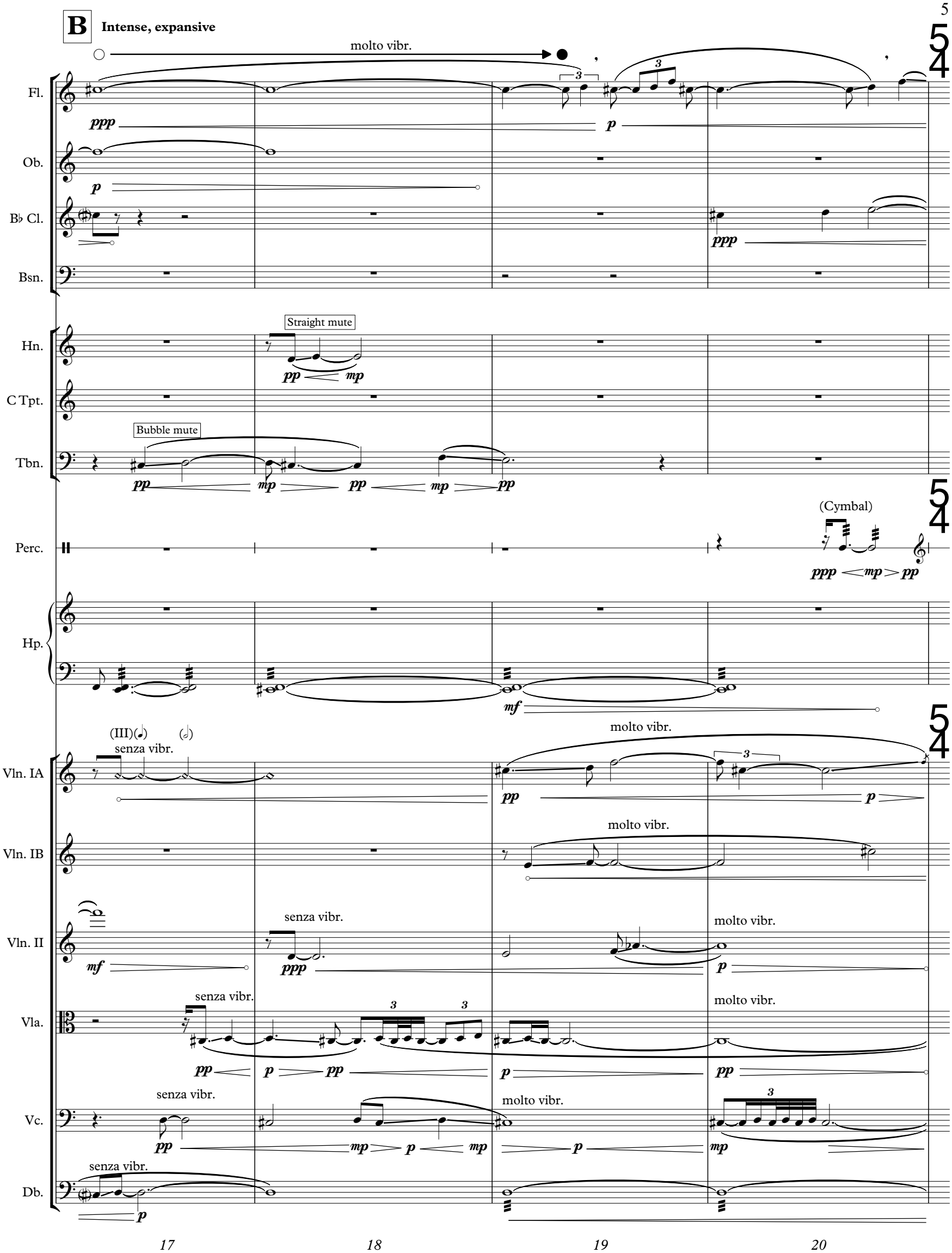
Vc.

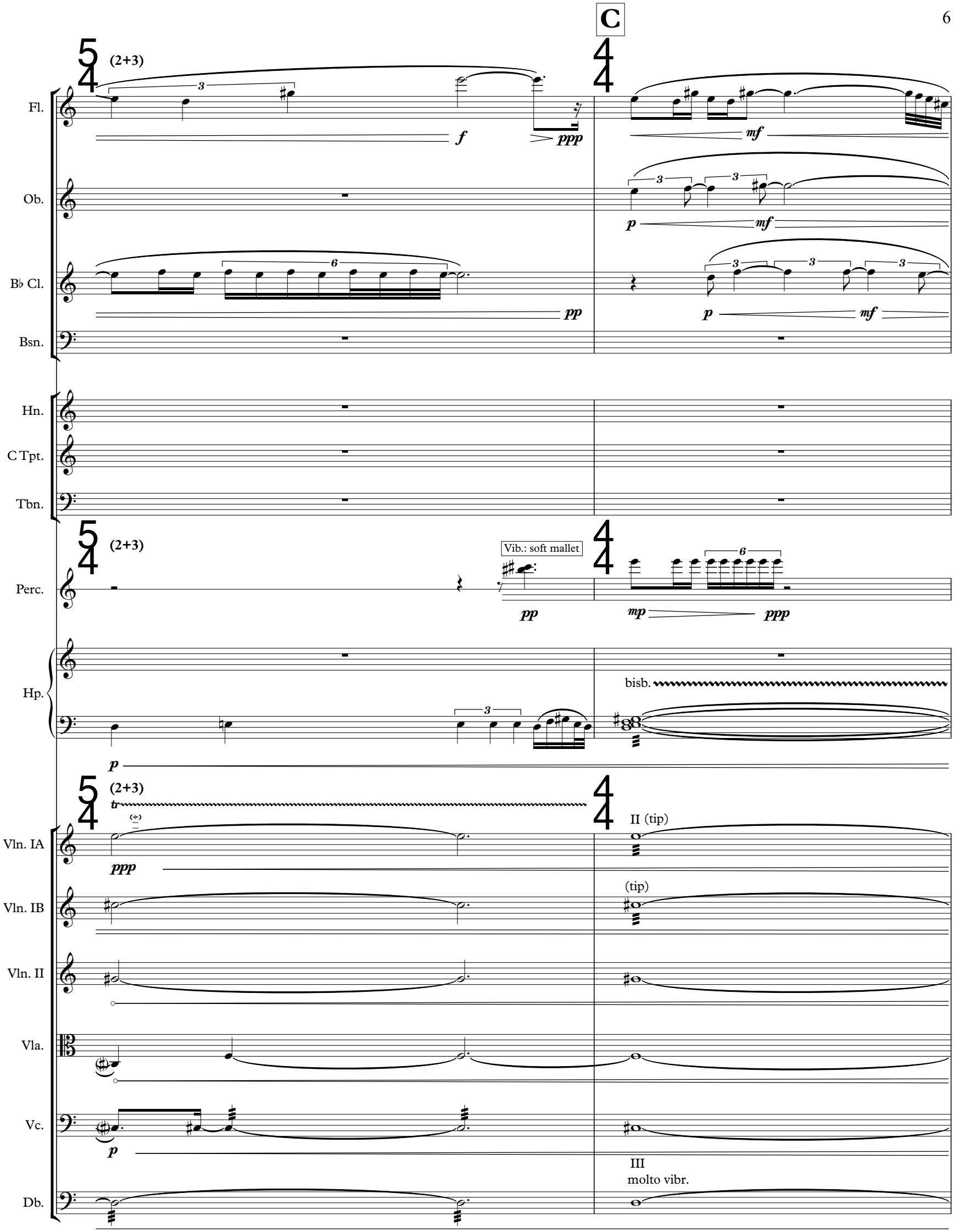
ppp

Db.

9 *10* *11* *12*


(2+3)
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Perc.
Cymbal
(C#)
Hp.
Vln. IA
Vln. IB
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.
N
13
14
15
16


B
Intense, expansive
molto vibr.
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Straight mute
C Tpt.
Bubble mute
Tbn.
Perc.
(Cymbal)
Hp.
(III)
senza vibr.
Vln. IA
molto vibr.
Vln. IB
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.
17
18
19
20


C
(2+3)
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Perc.
Vib.: soft mallet
Hp.
bisb.
Vln. IA
Vln. IB
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.
II (tip)
(tip)
III
molto vibr.

D

Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Perc.
Hp.
Vln. IA
Vln. IB
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

(Vib., as smooth as possible)
Cymbals
Mark Tree
(circular motion)
ST
N

Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Perc.
Hp.
Vln. IA
Vln. IB
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

Vib.: soft mallet

ST

E

Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Perc.
Hp.
Vln. IA
Vln. IB
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

mute off
mute off

II

29 30 31

F

5/4 (2+3)

To Piccolo

Piccolo

Fl.

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

mute off

C Tpt.

Tbn.

5/4 (2+3)

Mark Tree

Perc.

Hp.

5/4 (2+3)

N

Vln. IA

Vln. IB

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

Picc.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Perc.
Hp.
Vln. IA
Vln. IB
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

Straight mute
Bubble mute
Vib.: hard mallet
solo
III

G

To Fl.

5/4 (3+2) 4/4

Picc.

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

mute off

C Tpt.

mute off

Tbn.

Perc.

Tam-tam

5/4 (3+2) 4/4

Chimes

Hp.

II

I

Vln. IA

Vln. IB

Vln. II

Vla.

unison

(II)

Vc.

Db.

H **Mysterious, graceful**
(4+1)

timbral trill w/ L.H. 1
whistle tone
tr

Flute

Picc.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Perc.
Hp.
Vln. IA
Vln. IB
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

(4+1)
Crotales

ricochet

(harmonic gliss.
in the highest register in string D and G)

div.

I **Intense, dramatic**

Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Perc.
Hp.
Vln. IA
Vln. IB
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

Straight mute
Bubble mute
Bubble mute
Chimes
(circular gliss.)
ricochet
ricochet
ricochet
ricochet
unis. ricochet
div.
pizz.
arco

43 44 45

Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Perc.
Hp.
Vln. IA
Vln. IB
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

mute off
mute off
Mark Tree
unis.
arco

J

(3+2)

Fl.

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

C Tpt.

Tbn.

(3+2)

tam-tam (scratch with handle)

Chimes

Perc.

Hp.

bisb.

(3+2)

Vln. IA

Vln. IB

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

K

(3+2)
accel.
♩ = 72

Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Perc.
Hp.
Vln. IA
Vln. IB
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

tam-tam (scratch with handle)

(circular gliss.)

Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Perc.
Hp.
Vln. IA
Vln. IB
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

Straight mute
Bubble mute
Bubble mute
Mark Tree
Cymbal
ST
ST → SP → ST

56 57 58 59

L **Dark, expressive**

Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Perc.
Hp.
Vln. IA
Vln. IB
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

(Cymbal)

60 61 62 63

M

To piccolo

Piccolo

Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Perc.
Hp.
Vln. IA
Vln. IB
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

(port.)

64 65 66 67

N **Bright and starry**

To Picc.

Glockenspiel

(circular gliss. when glissing upward)

l.v.

Picc.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Perc.
Hp.
Vln. IA
Vln. IB
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

68 69 70 71

rit.

Picc.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.

rit.

Perc.
Hp.

rit.

Vln. IA
Vln. IB
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

To Vib.

l.v.

tr

72 73 74 75

O

♩ = 60

Picc.

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

C Tpt.

Tbn.

♩ = 60

Perc.

Vib.: bow

Vib.: hard mallet

Hp.

♩ = 60

Vln. IA

Vln. IB

Vln. II

Vla.

N → SP

(harmonic gliss.
in the highest register
in string D and G)

SP → N

div.
(harmonic gliss. on string D)

(harmonic gliss. on string D)

Vc.

Db.

P **With tender warmth and enthusiasm**

Picc.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Perc.
Hp.
Vln. IA
Vln. IB
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

To Fl.

(vib.)

Cymbal

15ma

(circular gliss.)

SP

N

SP

ST

unison

80 81 82 83

Picc.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Perc.
Hp.
Vln. IA
Vln. IB
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

Tam-tam: scratch with soft mallet
Tam-tam: hit as soft as possible
Tam-tam: hit as soft as possible
To Glock.
SP
N

84 85 86 87

Q

solo

Flute

Fl.

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

C Tpt.

Tbn.

Perc.

Glockenspiel:
soft mallet

Crotales:
soft mallet

Hp.

Vln. IA

Vln. IB

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

88 *89* *90*

R

Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Perc.
Hp.
Vln. IA
Vln. IB
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

ff *f* *mp* *f* *mp* *mp* *p* *mp* (*f*) *ff* (*f*) (tr) *f* *ff* *f* *mp* *p* *f* *ff* *mf* (*f*)

To Piccolo

Fl.

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

C Tpt.

Tbn.

Glockenspiel:
soft mallet

Crotales:
soft mallet

Perc.

Hp.

Vln. IA

Vln. IB

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

94 95 96 97

Piccolo

Picc.

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

C Tpt.

Tbn.

Perc.

Hp.

Vln. IA

Vln. IB

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

senza vibr.

senza vibr.

senza vibr.

98 99 100 101

(2+3)

Picc.

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

C Tpt.

Tbn.

(2+3)

Perc.

Hp.

(2+3)

Vln. IA

Vln. IB

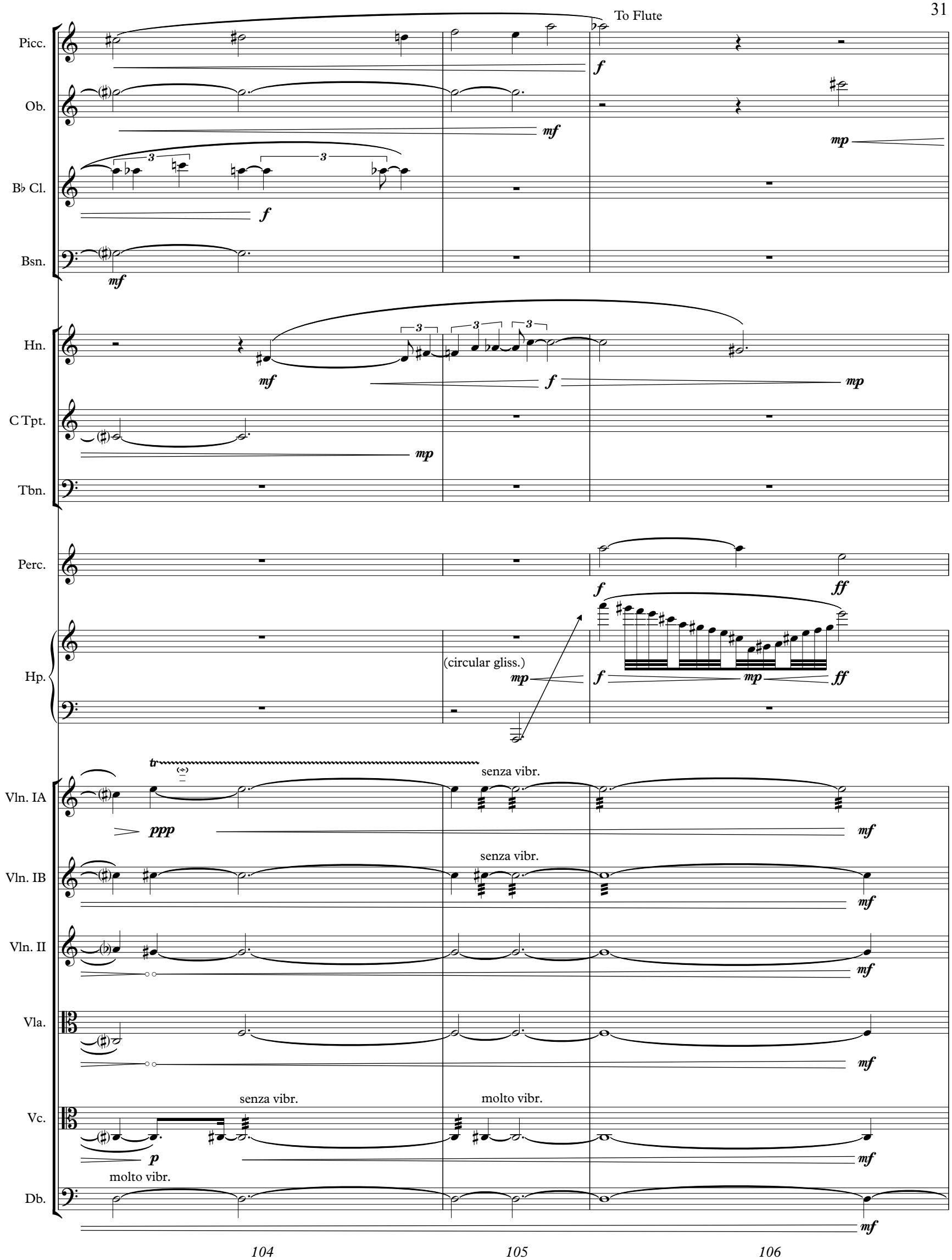
Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

molto vibr.


To Flute
Picc.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Perc.
Hp.
(circular gliss.)
Vln. IA
Vln. IB
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.
senza vibr.
molto vibr.
104
105
106

S (3+2)

Flute

Fl.

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

C Tpt.

Tbn.

Perc.

Hp.

Vln. IA

Vln. IB

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

(3+2)

molto vibr.

rit.

Fl.

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

C Tpt.

Tbn.

rit.

Perc.

Hp.

rit.

Vln. IA

Vln. IB

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

109 *110* *111*