Sarantine Polyphony

2010

For String Orchestra

Paul Frehner

Instrumentation and Performance Notes

String Orchestra: 5 4 3 3 1* minimum

*Note on the double bass part: There are a number of solo passages in which the bassist has to play extensively in the lowest register, from C-G. These passages contain frequent glissandi and other expressive techniques. Thus, it would be easiest to play the part on a bass tuned C-A-D-G at the nut or on a 5-string bass. If the part is played on a 4-string bass with a C extension operated by mechanical capos the bassist will have to work out a solution to these passages that approximates as much as possible what is indicated.

Accidentals function in the traditional manner. However, cautionary accidentals are frequently indicated.

Microtones in the score are indicated as follows:

Quarter-tone sharp

Three quarter tones sharp

Quarter-tone flat

Three quarter tones flat

Slightly sharp: This indication is always placed on top of an accidental. if the arrow is applied to a note that is natural, sharp or flat play that note slightly sharper (by less than a ¼ tone). Likewise, if it is applied to a note that is already quarter-tone sharp or flat or three quarter tones sharp play that pitch slightly sharper still.

Duration: 17 minutes approximately

Contents

I.	The Zubir	1
II.	Shirin's Dance	32
III.	The Sleepless Ones	38

Program Note

Sarantine Polyphony draws its title from Canadian author Guy Gavriel Kay's historical fantasy series *The Sarantine Mosiac.* The action in Kay's *Sarantine* novels takes place in Sarantium, a fictional city and empire modeled after Byzantium in the time of Justinian, ca. 500-600 AD. In the novels Kay vividly paints a sophisticated society that is both rich in culture and customs and filled with political intrigues and sub plots. The dichotomy of theological beliefs is a central line of inquiry in the novels. Though Sarantium is by empirical decree a monotheistic society, pagan beliefs and the half-world are ever-present in the minds of its inhabitants. Specific characters and events from the novels were the inspiration for the three movements of this piece.

Movement I – *The Zubir*
The *Zubir* is the physical manifestation of the pagan bison god of the forests. Its presence is both terrible and awe-inspiring. Caius Crispin, the protagonist in the story, encounters the Zubir on the Day of the Dead when the god requires a human sacrifice. Crispin is forever changed by this encounter.

Movement II – *Shirin's Dance*
Shirin is the daughter of an alchemist and the most celebrated exotic dancer in the city of Sarantium.

Movement III – *The Sleepless Ones*
The Sleepless Ones are a holy order of clerics who keep prayerful vigil all night long while the god fights through the darkness of night to ensure the light of a new day. In this movement my intention is to create the impression of the clerics' chanting echoing in the vast space of their great basilica.

Sarantine Polyphony was commissioned by the McGill Chamber Orchestra in celebration of its 70th Anniversary Season. Financial support for this piece was graciously provided by the Canada Council for the Arts. Boris Brott conducted the McGill Chamber Orchestra in the premiere performance of this work on March 15, 2010, in Redpath Hall, Montreal.

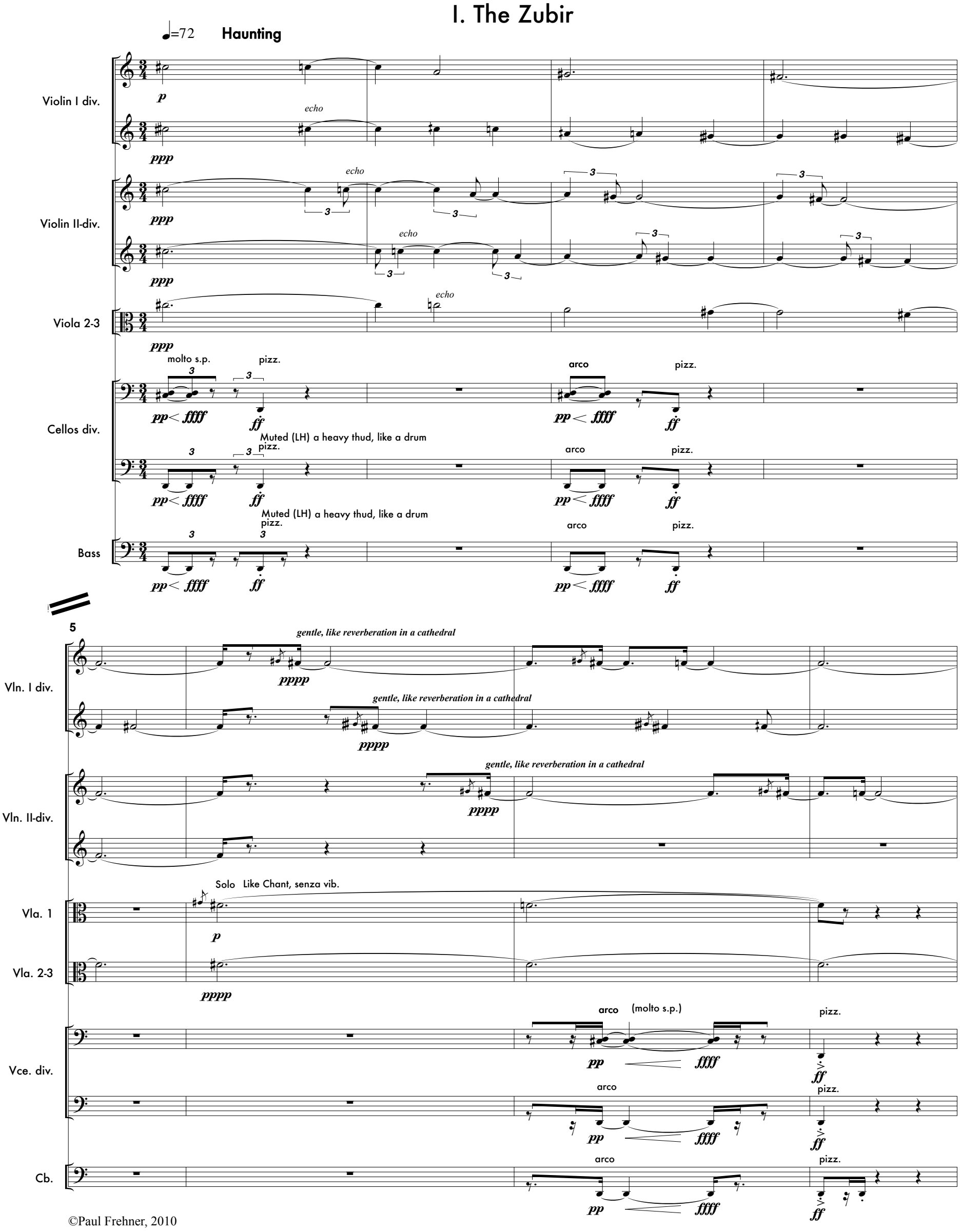
Sarantine Polyphony

For String Orchestra

For Boris Brott and the McGill Chamber Orchestra

Paul Frehner, 2009

I. The Zubir



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9

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

gentle, like reverberation in a cathedral

pppp

Vla. 1

mp 3 3 *pp* 3 *mp*

Vla. 2-3

13

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Vla. 1

mf 3 *mf* 3 5

Vla. 2-3

Vce. div.

arco (molto s.p.) *pp* *ffff* pizz. *ff* arco *pp*

arco *pp* *ffff* pizz. *ff* arco *pp*

Cb.

pizz. *pp* *ffff* *ff* *pp*

18

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Vla. 1

Vla. 2-3

Vce. div.

Cb.

pizz.

22

(All 1st violins)

Vln. I-1
senza vib. → vib. → extreme vib.
pppp

Vln. I-2
senza vib. → vib. → extreme vib.
pppp

Vln. I-3
senza vib. → vib. → extreme vib.
pppp

Vln. I-4
senza vib. → vib. → extreme vib.
pppp

Vln. I-5
senza vib. → vib. → extreme vib.
pppp

Vln. II-div.
mf
senza vib. → vib. → extreme vib.
pppp
mf
pppp

Vla. 1
marcato
f
9 9 9
3 3 3

Vla. 2
mf
pppp

Vla. 3
mf
pppp

Vce. div.
ord.
arco
mf
pppp
pizz.
ff
arco
mf
pppp

Cb.
ff

26

Vln. I-1
Vln. I-2
Vln. I-3
Vln. I-4
Vln. I-5
Vln. II-div.
Vla. 1
Vla. 2
Vla. 3
Vce. div.
Cb.

senza vib.
molto s.p.
arco
pizz.
pp mf p < sfff > p < sfff ff ffff

31

Vln. I-1

Vln. I-2

Vln. I-3

Vln. I-4

Vln. I-5

Vln. II-div.

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vla. 3

Vce. div.

Cb.

p *sfff* *p*

35

Vln. I
div.
f *pp* *pppp*

Vln. II
div.
f *pp* *pppp*

Vla. 1
Solo
3 *mf* 3

Vla. 2
undulating s.p. ord.
pp *ff* *mp*

Vla. 3
undulating s.p.
pp *ff* *mp*

Vce. 1
3
ppp *f* *pp*
undulating s.p.
ff

Vce. 2
3
ppp *f* *pp*
undulating s.p.
ff

Vce. 3
3
ppp *f* *pp*

Cb.
pizz.
ff

40

Vla. 1

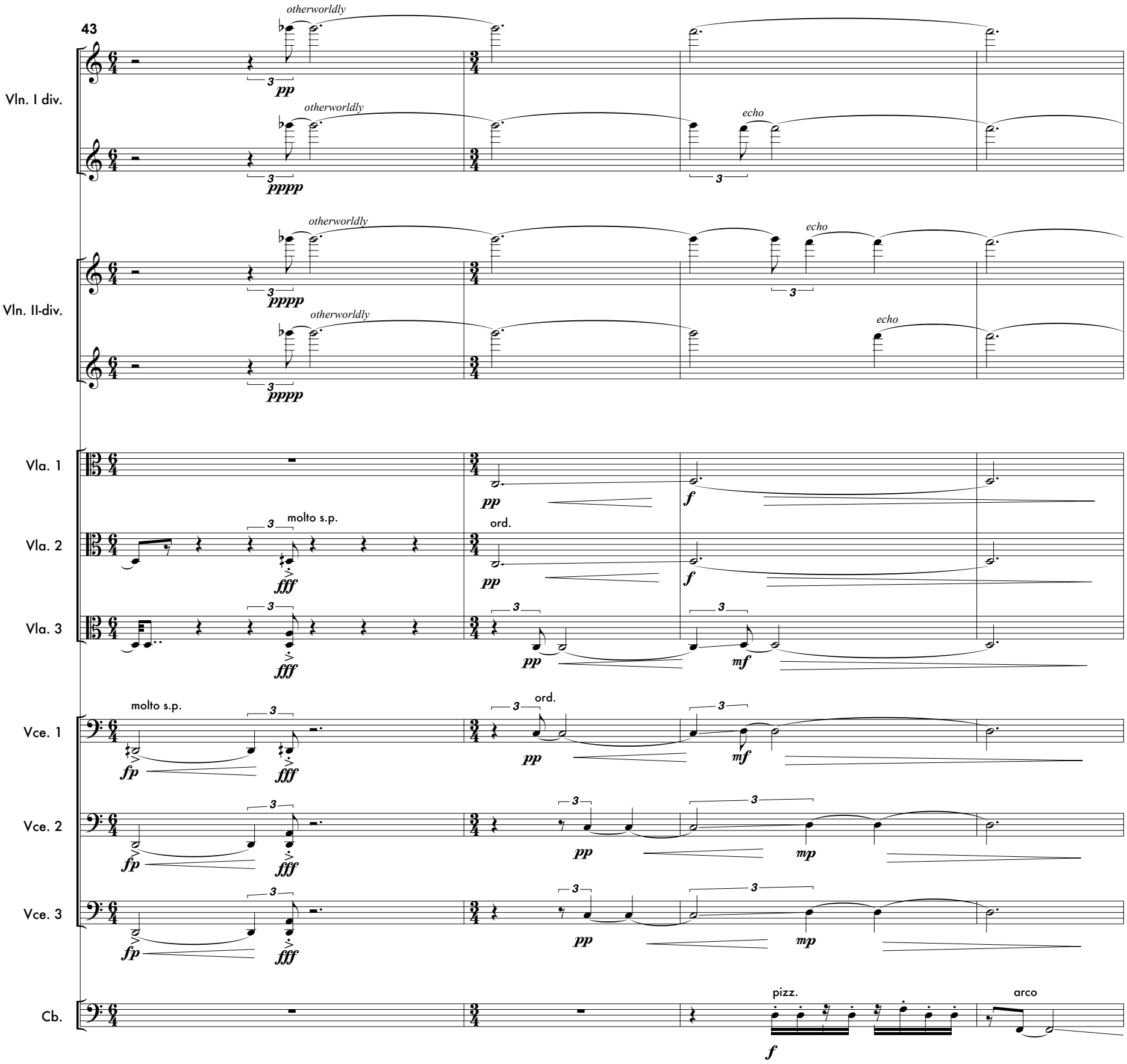
Vla. 2
s.p. ord.
f *mp* *mf* *p* *mp* *pp* *p* *ppp*

Vla. 3
ord. s.p. ord.
f *mp* *mf* *p* *mp* *pp* *p* *ppp*

Vce. 1
ord. s.p. ord.
mp *f* *mp* *mf* *p* *mp* *pp*

Vce. 2
ord. s.p. ord.
mp *f* *mp* *mf* *p* *mp* *pp*

Vce. 3


43
Vln. I div.
otherworldly
pp
otherworldly
pppp
echo
Vln. II-div.
otherworldly
pppp
echo
otherworldly
pppp
echo
Vla. 1
pp
f
Vla. 2
molto s.p.
fff
ord.
pp
f
Vla. 3
fff
pp
mf
Vce. 1
molto s.p.
fp
fff
ord.
pp
mf
Vce. 2
fp
fff
pp
mp
Vce. 3
fp
fff
pp
mp
Cb.
pizz.
f
arco

47

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vla. 3

Vce. 1

Vce. 2

Vce. 3

Cb.

Solo

undulating

s.p.

ord.

52

56

Vln. I

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vla. 3

Vce. 1

Vce. 2

Vce. 3

Cb.

molto s.p.

Solo arco

wide amplitude fluctuation

(rapidly move between pp-ff)

Wide, pitch fluctuation

shuddering vib.

62

Vln. I

Vla. 1

Cb.

Solo

65

Vln. I div.

Vla. 1

Vce. div.

Cb.

echo

s.p.

ord.

69

Vln. I div.

Vln. II

Vla. 1

Vla. 2-3

Vce. div.

Cb.

73

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Cb.

79

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Cb.

84

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

pizz.

Cellos

ff

Cb.

With Movement

87

Vln. I div.

marcato

ff

f

Vln. II-div.

Vla. div.

Vce. div.

fff

Cb.

93

Vln. I div.

8va

Vln. II-div.

Vla. div.

Vce. div.

Cb.

99

Vln. I div.

(8va)

Vln. II-div.

Vla. div.

Vce. div.

Cb.

105

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Vla. div.

Vce. div.

Cb.

8va

112

marcato

(8va)

115

Vln. I 1-2
Vln. I-3
Vln. I-4
Vln. I-5
Vln. II-1
Vln. II-2
Vln. II 3-4
Vla. 1
Vla. 2
Vla. 3
Vce. 1
Vce. 2
Vce. 3
Cb.

ffff sfff f sfff

121

Vln. I 1-2

Vln. I-3

Vln. I-4

Vln. I-5

Vln. II-1

Vln. II-2

Vln. II 3-4

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vla. 3

Vce. 1

Vce. 2

Vce. 3

Cb.

125

Vln. I-1
Vln. I-2
Vln. I-3
Vln. I-4
Vln. I-5
Vln. II-1
Vln. II-2
Vln. II-3
Vln. II-4
Vla. 1
Vla. 2
Vla. 3
Vce. 1
Vce. 2
Vce. 3
Cb.

solo
pizz.

129

Fluid Movement

Vln. I-1
Vln. I-2
Vln. I-3
Vln. I-4
Vln. I-5
Vln. II-1
Vln. II-2
Vln. II-3
Vln. II-4
Vla. 1
Vla. 2
Vla. 3
Vce. div.
Cb.

Solo
Like Chant, senza vib.

arco

133

Vln. II 1-2

Vln. II-3

Vln. II-4

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vla. 3

Vce. div.

Cb.

138

Vln. I-1

Vln. II 1-2

Vln. II-3

Vln. II-4

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vla. 3

Vce. div.

Cb.

Solo

143

Vln. I-1

Vln. II 1-2

pppp *mp*

Vln. II-3

pppp

Vln. II-4

pppp

echo

Vla. 1

3 3 3

p

Vla. 2

pp *pppp*

Vla. 3

pp *pppp*

Vce. div.

pppp *pp* *pppp*

(fall)

Cb.

3 3 3 3 3 3

mp

147

Vln. I-1

Vln. I-2

Vln. I-4

Vln. I-5

Vln. II 1-2

Vln. II-3

Vln. II-4

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vla. 3

Vce. div.

Cb.

151

Solo

Vln. I-1

Vln. I 2-3

Vln. I-4

Vln. I-5

Vln. II 1-2

Vln. II-3

Vln. II-4

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vla. 3

Vce. div.

Cb.

pizz.

157

Vln. I-1

mf

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

pppp

pp

Vla. 3

pppp

pp

Vce. div.

pp

pppp

Cb.

arco

pp

mp

160

Vln. I-1

Vln. II 1-2

pppp

mp

pppp

Vln. II-3

pppp

mp

Vln. II-4

pppp

mp

Vla. 1

f

Vla. 2

pppp

pp

Vla. 3

pppp

pp

Vce. div.

pp

pppp

Cb.

163

Vln. I-1

Vln. I 2-3

pppp *p* *pppp*

Vln. I-4

pppp *p*

Vln. I-5

pppp *p*

Vln. II 1-2

mp

Vln. II-3

pppp

Vln. II-4

pppp

Vla. 1

3 3 3

Vla. 2

pppp *pp*

Vla. 3

pppp *pp*

Vce. div.

pp *pppp*

Cb.

3 3 3 3

166

Vln. I-1

Vln. I 2-3

mp

Vln. I-4

pppp

Vln. I-5

pppp

Vln. II 1-2

pppp

Vln. II-3

mp

pppp

Vln. II-4

mp

pppp

Vla. 1

3

3

3

Vla. 2

pppp

mp

Vla. 3

pppp

mp

Vce. div.

pp

pppp

Cb.

3

3

3

169

Vln. I

Vln. I 2-3

Vln. I-4

Vln. I-5

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vla. 3

Vce. div.

Cb.

175

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vce. div.

Cb.

178

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vce. div.

Cb.

Div. à 3

Div. à 3

p

ff

p

ff

181

Vln. I-1

Vln. I-2

Vln. I-3

Vln. I-4

Vln. I-5

Vln. II-1

Vln. II-2

Vln. II-3

Vln. II-4

Vla.

Cellos

Cb.

185

Vln. I-1

Vln. I-2

Vln. I-3

Vln. I-4

Vln. I-5

Vln. II-1

Vln. II-2

Vln. II-3

Vln. II-4

Vla.

Cellos

Cb.

189

Vln. I-1

Vln. I-2

Vln. I-3

Vln. I-4

Vln. I-5

Vln. II-1

Vln. II-2

Vln. II-3

Vln. II-4

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vla. 3

Cellos

Cb.

p

193

Solo

Vln. I-1

Vln. I-2

Vln. I-3

Vln. I-4

Vln. I-5

Vln. II-1

Vln. II-2

Vln. II-3

Vln. II-4

Solo

Vla.

Vla. 2

Vla. 3

Cellos

Cb.

197

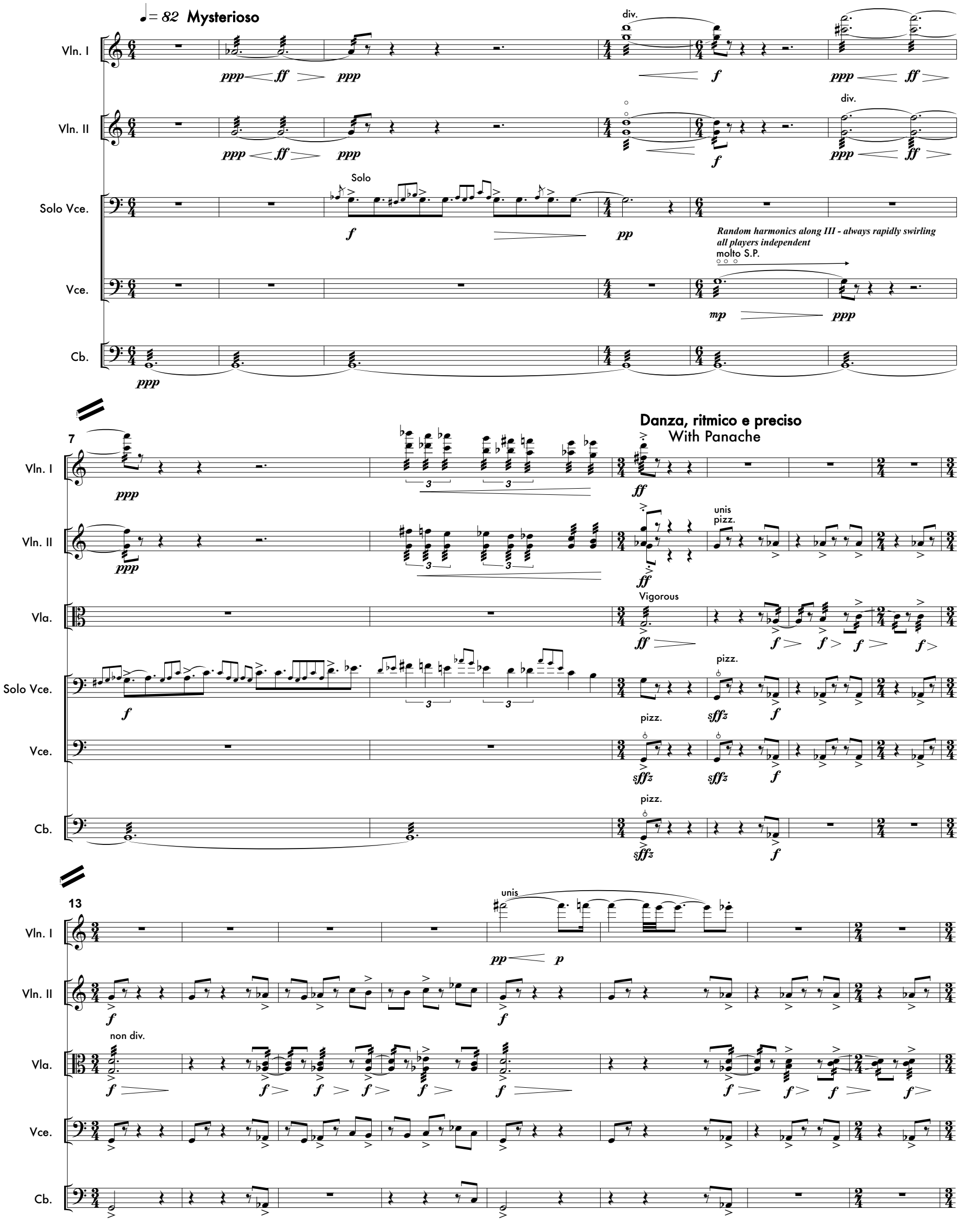
Vln. I-1
Vln. I-2
Vln. I-3
Vln. I-4
Vln. I-5
Vln. II
Vln. II-2
Vln. II-3
Vln. II-4
Vla.
Vla. 2
Vla. 3
Vce. 1
Vce. 2
Vce. 3
Cb.

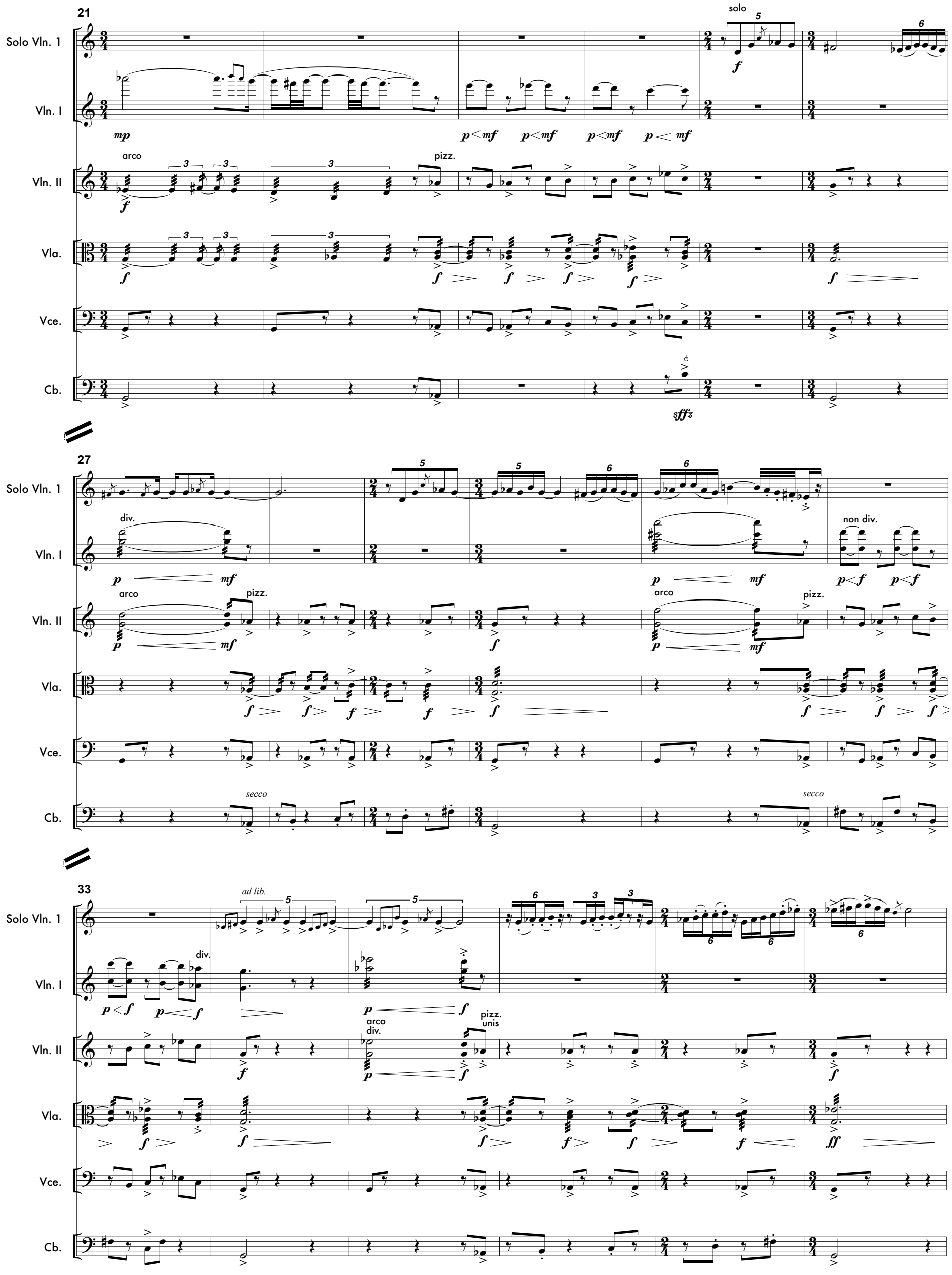
arco

pppp *mp* *f*

3

II. Shirin's Dance




21
Solo Vln. 1
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vce.
Cb.
solo
arco
pizz.
27
div.
non div.
secco
33
ad lib.
div.
arco
div.
pizz.
unis

39

Solo Vln. 1

Vln. I

div. a 3

Vln. II

arco
div.

pizz.
unis

Vla.

div.

Vce.

Cb.

43

Vln. I

unis

Vln. II-div.

arco

pizz.

Vla.

Vce.

Cb.

legato

secco

49

Vln. I

div.

unis

Vln. II-div.

arco

pizz.

Vla.

Vce.

Cb.

legato

secco

57

Solo Vln. 1

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vce.

Cb.

solo

non div.

div.

arco

pizz.

63

68

73

Solo Vln. 1

Vln. I

non div.

Vln. II-div.

div.

Vla.

arco

pizz.

Vce.

Cb.

78

Solo Vln. 1

Vln. I div.

div.

Vln. II-div.

Vla.

Vce.

Cb.

86

Vln. I

Vln. II

div.

Vla.

arco

Vce.

arco

Cb.

97

Vln. I

pizz.

Vln. II

pizz.

Vla.

non div.

Cellos

Vce.

pizz.

Cb.

101

Vln. I

arco

Vln. II-div.

arco

arco

Solo Vce.

molto S.P.

Random harmonics along III - always rapidly swirling all players independent

Vce.

Cb.

III. The Sleepless Ones

♩= 60 **Expansive**

Solo Vln. 1
gli altri
Vln. II solo
gli altri
Vla. 1
Vla. 2-3
Vce. 1
Cb.

Solo
Solo'Sung,' like Eastern chant

p *ppp* *ppp* *mp*

6

Vla. 1
Vla. 2-3
Vce. 1
Vce. 2
Vce. 3
Cb.

echo cello I
gentle, like reverberation in a cathedral

pp *ppp*

10

Solo Vln. 1

gli altri

Vln. II solo

gli altri

Vla. 1

Vla. 2-3

Vce. 1

Vce. 2

Vce. 3

Cb.

Solo

p

pp

6 5 3

mp

mf

15

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla. 1

Vla. 2-3

Vce. 1

Vce. 2

Vce. 3

Cb.

Solo molto vib.

senza vib.

solo molto vib.

ppp

19

Vla. 1

Vla. 2-3

Vce. 1

Vce. 2

Vce. 3

Cb.

23

Solo Vln. 1

gli altri

Vln. II solo

gli altri

Vla. 1

Vla. 2-3

Vce. 2

Vce. 3

27

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Vla.

Cellos

ppp

ppp

ppp

ppp

ppp

emerge from the texture

pp

33

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Vla.

Cellos

emerge from the texture

pp

mp pp

pp

pp

pp

3

3

3

3

mf

3

p

3

ppp

40

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Vla. div.

Cellos

pp

pp

mp

3

3

pp

46

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Vla. div.

Vce. div.

Cb.

p

p

mp

mp

p

p

mp

p

p

mp

3

3

mp

pp

p

mp

pp

p

mp

mp

52

Solo Vln. 1

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Vla. div.

Vce. div.

Cb.

56

div.

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Vla. div.

Cellos

Cb.

60

unis

Vln. I div.

Vln. II-div.

Vla. div.

Cellos

Cb.

65

Vln. I

Vla. 1

Vla. 2-3

molto s.p.
Slowly and randomly move between the highest possible partials on the C string.

echo cello I

Vce. 1

Solo

Vce. 2

echo cello I

Vce. 3

echo cello I

Cb.

69

Vln. I

Vla. 1

Vla. 2-3

Vce. 1

Vce. 2

Vce. 3

Cb.

solo
molto vib.

senza vib.

(Slowly and randomly move between the highest possible partials on the C string.)

(solo)

75

molto vib.

senza vib.

79

Vln. I — div. — *ppp*

Vln. II — *ppp*

Vla. — *gentle, like reverberation in a cathedral* — *pp*

Vce. 1 — *mf* — (solo) — *p*

Vce. 2 — *gentle, like reverberation in a cathedral* — *pp*

Vce. 3 — *gentle, like reverberation in a cathedral* — *pp*

Cb. — *pp*

84

Solo Vln. 1 — *p*

gli altri — unis — *pp*

Vln. II solo — *p*

gli altri — *pp*

Vla. 1 — *p*

Vla. 2

Vla. 3

Vce. 1

Vce. 2

Vce. 3

Cb.