

*Looking for the Land that is Nowhere*  
*Hommage à Horatiu Radulescu*

for Theremin and String Octet

2010

Christian Mason



Instrumentation: Scordatura\* String Octet with Theremin:

Theremin (with *Moogerfooger MF-101 Low-Pass Filter*\*\*)

Violin I (-2)

Violin II (non scord.)

Violin III (+1)

Violin IV (-1)

Viola I (non scord.)

Viola II (-2)

Violoncello (-1)

Contrabass (non scord.)

\*Indicated by the number of semitones + or – from the standard tuning. Maximum +1 or -2 semitones. All strings remain tuned in 5ths.

\*\*This can either be provided by the composer or bought from Moog Music at [www.moogmusic.com](http://www.moogmusic.com)

Note on performance:

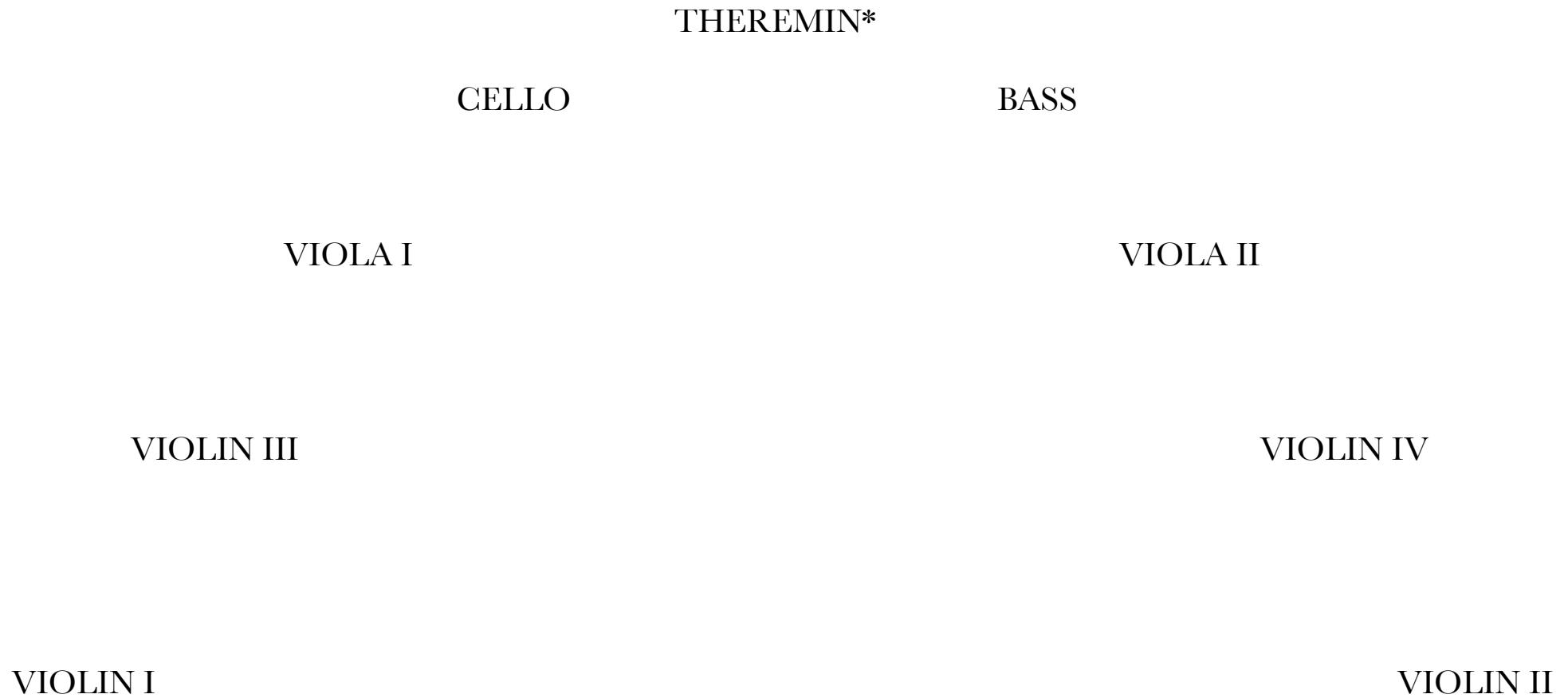
In order to exploit the possibilites of the scordatura the whole ensemble is treated as a single 'macro-instrument', with the 24 open strings (plus all the related harmonics) being the main material which it explores. The theremin exists at the heart of the ensemble, often holding together the lines and their spectral emanations which are shared around the strings. Even the most pointillistic moments were conceived as lines, and this should be conveyed in performance.

Score in C

Duration c.13 minutes

*Christian Mason was one of the winners of the 2009 Royal Philharmonic Society Composition Prize and was consequently commissioned to write this work for the Philharmonia Music of Today Series. The first performance took place on June 29<sup>th</sup> 2010 at the Royal Festival Hall, played by members of the Philharmonia Orchestra with Lydia Kavina on Theremin.*

## Ensemble Layout



\*It is essential that the theremin has sufficient space from surrounding instruments to avoid tuning interference.

N.B. The order of instruments in the score reflects their spatial layout: left to right here = top to bottom in the score.

**SCORDATURA OPEN STRINGS and NATURAL HARMONICS** (in all cases the 7th will sound slightly flat)

It is understood that the scordatura may result in unstable tuning. To avoid this as far as possible it is recommended that scordatura instruments are prepared some days in advance of the performance.

I                   II                   III                   IV



Looking for the Land that is Nowhere

Hommage à Horatiu Radulescu

Christian Mason (January-May 2010)

I

G.P. (c. 10 sec.)

Violin I  
(scord. -2)

Violin III  
(scord. +1)

Viola I  
(non-scord.)

Violoncello  
(scord. -1)

Theremin

Contrabass  
(non-scord.)

Viola II  
(scord. -2)

Violin IV  
(scord. -1)

Violin II  
(non-scord.)

**Portentous** ♩ = c.40

Vln. I (-2)

Vln. III (+1)

Vla. I

*Pizz.* should be articulated approx. half way between stopped note and bridge for a sound with a twangy attack

Sul IV  
senza vib.  
*pizz.*

arco flautando

Vc. (-1)

Th.

senza vib.  
arco

Cb.

Vla. II (-2)

sempre flautando

Vln. IV (-1)

Vln. II

7

Vln. I (-2)

Vln. III (+1)

Vla. I

Vc. (-1) pizz. arco flautando pizz. arco while maintaining harmonic pull string sideways to gliss up

Th.

Cb. pizz. arco pizz. arco pizz. -3 arco II III

Vla. II (-2) p ff p ff p ff

Vln. IV (-1)

Vln. II

**A** Vast, Expansive

♩ = c.80

♩ = ♩

4

Musical score page 4, section A, Vast, Expansive.

Instrumentation: Vln. I (-2), Vln. III (+1), Vla. I, Vc. (-1), Th., Cb., Vla. II (-2), Vln. IV (-1), Vln. II.

Key signature: Vln. I, Vln. III, Vla. I, Vc. (-1) have one sharp; Th. has one flat; Cb. has one sharp; Vla. II, Vln. IV, Vln. II have one flat.

Time signature: Common time (indicated by '12').

Performance instructions:

- Vln. I (-2): Dynamics ff, p, ff.
- Vln. III (+1): Dynamics ff, ppp, ff. Instruction: nat. harm. gliss.
- Vla. I: Dynamics ff, ppp, ff. Instruction: nat. harm. gliss.
- Vc. (-1): Dynamics ff, ppp, ff. Instruction: nat. harm. gliss.
- Th.: Dynamics pp, fff. Instruction: molto sul pont., poco sul pont., ord., sul tasto.
- Cb.: Dynamics ff, ppp flautando.
- Vla. II (-2): Dynamics p, ff. Instruction: 3.
- Vln. IV (-1): Dynamics ff, ppp, ff. Instruction: nat. harm. gliss.
- Vln. II: Dynamics ff, ppp, ff. Instruction: nat. harm. gliss.

Text: LOW-PASS FILTER ON: smooth/4-pole Amt. 5/Mix 10/Cut 4/Res 7

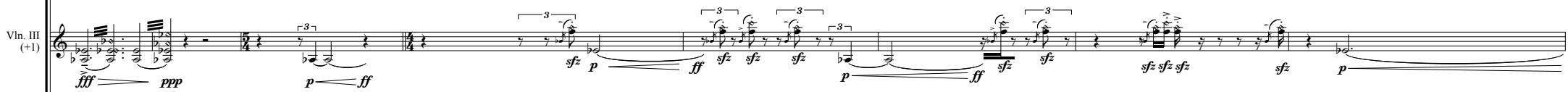
Musical score page 20, featuring nine staves for different instruments:

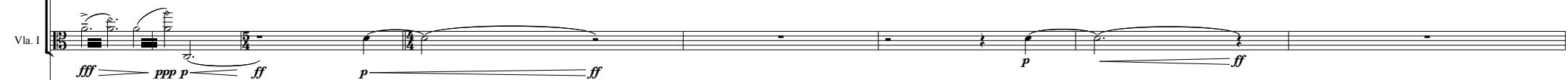
- Vln. I (-2)**: Starts with **ff**, followed by a dynamic change.
- Vln. III (+1)**: Starts with **p**, followed by **ff**.
- Vla. I**: Starts with **p**, followed by **ff**. Includes markings for **pizz.** and **arco**.
- Vc. (-1)**: Features **nat. harm. gliss.** markings. Dynamics include **ppp**, **fff**, **ppp**, **ppp**, and **ppp**.
- Th.**: Dynamics include **ppp**, **fff**, **ppp**, and **ppp**. Includes a **FILTER OFF** instruction.
- Cb.**: Dynamics include **fff**, **ppp**, **fffz**, **fp**, and **ppp**.
- Vla. II (-2)**: Starts with **p**, followed by **ff**. Includes **pizz.** and **arco**.
- Vln. IV (-1)**: Starts with **p**, followed by **ff**.
- Vln. II**: Starts with **p**, followed by **ff**.

**B** Erratically energized!

28

Vln. I (-2) 

Vln. III (+1) 

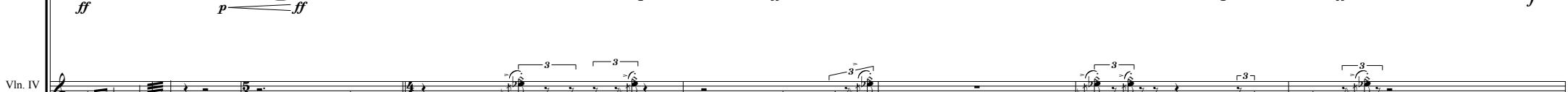
Vla. I 

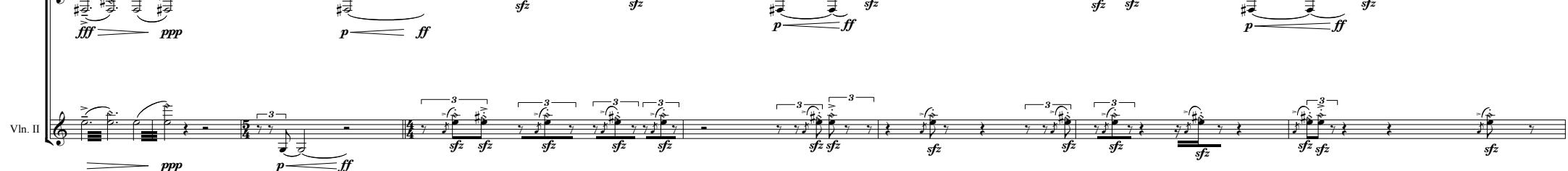
Vc. (-1) 

Th. 

Cb. 

Vla. II (-2) 

Vln. IV (-1) 

Vln. II 

pizz.

Slower  
rall.

$\downarrow = 60$

36

Vln. I (-2)

Vln. III (+1)

Vla. I

Vc. (-1)

Th.

Cb.

Vla. II (-2)

Vln. IV (-1)

Vln. II

nat. harm. gliss.

pizz.

arco

nat. harm. gliss.

nat. harm. gliss.

pizz.

II III  
arco

pizz. arco

arco

pizz.

nat. harm. gliss.

nat. harm. gliss.

pizz.

arco

8

Vln. I (-2)

Vln. III (+1)

Vla. I

Vc. (-1)

Th.

Cb.

Vla. II (-2)

Vln. IV (-1)

Vln. II

51

Vln. I (-2)

Vln. III (+1)

Vla. I

Vc. (-1)

Th.

Cb.

Vla. II (-2)

Vln. IV (-1)

Vln. II

pizz.  
arco  
sul pont.

pizz.  
ff  
sffz  
sffz  
ff

arco  
sul pont.

molto  
sul pont.

ord.

nat. harm. gliss.

(non-harm.)

sul pont.

ord.

(non-harm.)

pizz.  
ff  
sffz  
sffz  
ff

3

molto  
sul pont.

ord.

molto  
sul pont.

ord.

molto  
sul pont.

ord.

pizz.  
ff  
sffz  
sffz  
ff

arco  
sul pont.

pizz.  
ff  
sffz  
sffz  
ff

arco  
sul pont.

pizz.  
ff  
sffz  
sffz  
ff

3

pizz.  
ff  
sffz  
sffz  
ff

arco  
sul pont.

pizz.  
ff  
sffz  
sffz  
ff

3

pizz.

ff

58

Vln. I (-2) pizz. arco sul pont. pizz. IV arco sul pont. ord.

Vln. III (+1) pizz. arco 3 sul pont. arco ord. pizz. arco 3 ord.

Vla. I arco 3 pizz. arco 3 pizz. arco 3 ord.

Vc. (-1) sul pont. ord. 8va (non-harm.) sul pont. ord.

Th. molto sul pont. ord. molto sul pont. ord. molto sul pont. ord.

Cb. molto sul pont. ord. molto sul pont. ord. molto sul pont. ord.

Vla. II (-2) pizz. arco sul pont. pizz. arco sul pont. pizz. ord. sul pont. sul pont.

Vln. IV (-1) arco 3 pizz. arco sul pont. ord. sul pont. sul pont. 3 3

Vln. II ord. 3 3 3 3 3 3

rall.  $\downarrow = 40$  **D** Serene, wistful  $\downarrow = 60$

Vln. I (-2)

Vln. III (+1)

Vla. I (-1)

Vc. (-1)

Th.

Cb.

Vla. II (-2)

Vln. IV (-1)

Vln. II

Musical score page 70 featuring nine staves of music for various instruments. The instruments include Vln. I (-2), Vln. III (+1), Vla. I, Vc. (-1), Th., Cb., Vla. II (-2), Vln. IV (-1), and Vln. II. The score consists of two systems of music. The first system starts with a dynamic of *f* for Vln. I (-2) and includes performance instructions like "On grace notes gliss rapidly from harmonic to the next" and "Ascend the string, playing harmonics where they occur above, rather than below, the octave position". The second system continues the musical line with various dynamics and performance techniques. The score is written in 4/4 time with some changes in key signature.

Musical score for orchestra, page 80. The score includes parts for Vln. I (-2), Vln. III (+1), Vla. I, Vcl. (-1), Th., Cb., Vla. II (-2), Vln. IV (-1), and Vln. II. The score shows various musical dynamics and performance instructions like pizz., arco, and ff.

Instrumentation:

- Vln. I (-2)
- Vln. III (+1)
- Vla. I
- Vcl. (-1)
- Th.
- Cb.
- Vla. II (-2)
- Vln. IV (-1)
- Vln. II

Performance Instructions:

- pizz.
- arco
- ff
- f
- fp
- pp
- p
- mf
- espress.
- II

**E**

87

Vln. I (-2) *slide between notes but emphasise notated pitch*  
sul pont. 3 3 ord.

Vln. III (+1) *slide between notes but emphasise notated pitch*  
sul pont. ----> ord.  
*p* *ff* *fff* *f* *fff* *p* *ff* *p* *ff* *f* *ff*

Vla. I *sul pont.* *slide between notes but emphasise notated pitch*  
III 3 IV ----> ord. *f* *fff* *f* *ff* *p* *ff* *f* *ff* *II* *III* *f* *ff*

Vc. (-1) *pizz.* *pp* *ff* *pizz.* *pp* *ff* *arco* *p* *ff*

Th. *f* *p* *ff* *arco* *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *pp*

Cb. *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *pp*

Vla. II (-2) *slide between notes but emphasise notated pitch*  
sul pont. ----> ord.  
*ppp* *f* *fff* *f* *ff* *f* *ff* *f* *ff* *II* *III* *f* *ff*

Vln. IV (-1) *slide between notes but emphasise notated pitch*  
sul pont. ----> ord.  
*ppp* *f* *fff* *pp* *fff* *pp* *fff* *f* *ff* *f* *ff* *f* *ff*

Vln. II *slide between notes but emphasise notated pitch*  
sul pont. 5 ----> ord. *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *p* *espress.* 3 3 *-3* *-3*

## F

Vln. I (-2)

Vln. III (+1)

Vla. I

Vc. (-1) pizz. ff

Th.

Cb. f pp f p

Vla. II (-2)

Vln. IV (-1)

Vln. II

Musical score for orchestra and piano, page 99. The score includes parts for Vln. I (-2), Vln. III (+1), Vla. I, Vc. (-1), Th., Cb., Vla. II (-2), Vln. IV (-1), and Vln. II. The piano part is at the bottom. The score features dynamic markings such as *f*, *ff*, *fff*, *ffz*, and *fffz*. Various performance techniques are indicated, including slurs, grace notes, and slurs with '3' above them. Measure numbers 5, 7, and 9 are visible above the staves.

**G** Poco a poco rallentando  
(reaching  $\text{♩} = 60$  at letter M) . . . . .

$\text{♩} = 120$

play X 4

17

Musical score for orchestra and piano, page 17, section G. The score includes parts for Vln. I (-2), Vln. III (+1), Vla. I, Vc. (-1), Th., Cb., Vla. II (-2), Vln. IV (-1), and Vln. II. The tempo is  $\text{♩} = 120$ . The score consists of two systems of music. The first system starts with **Vln. I (-2)** playing **ff con forza** with sixteenth-note patterns. **Vln. III (+1)** plays **sul pont.** and **sfz**. **Vla. I** plays **sul pont.**, **ord.**, **ff**, **pp**, and **pp**. **Vc. (-1)** plays **pizz.** and **sfz**. **Th.** and **Cb.** play **ff** and **pp**. **Vla. II (-2)** plays **sul pont.** and **sfz**. The second system continues with **Vln. IV (-1)** playing **ff** and **Vln. II** playing **sfz**.

104

**Vln. I (-2)** **ff con forza**

**Vln. III (+1)** **sul pont.** **sfz**

**Vla. I** **sul pont.** **ord.** **ff** **pp** **pp**

**Vc. (-1)** **pizz.** **sfz**

**Th.**

**Cb.** **pizz.** **sfz**

**Vla. II (-2)** **sul pont.** **sfz**

**Vln. IV (-1)** **sfz**

**Vln. II** **sfz**

Musical score for orchestra, page 109. The score includes parts for Vln. I (-2), Vln. III (+1), Vla. I, Vcl. (-1), Th., Cb., Vla. II (-2), Vln. IV (-1), and Vln. II. The score shows various musical markings such as dynamic changes (e.g., sul pont., ord., sfz, ff, pp, sfp), articulations (e.g., 3, >, v), and performance instructions (e.g., (rall.)). The strings provide harmonic support, while woodwind entries like the bassoon and oboe add melodic interest.

**H**  $\text{♩} = \text{c.} 110$

Vln. I (-2)

sul pont. II play X 2 sul pont. II ord.

Vln. III (+1)

Vla. I

III

pizz. arco sul pont. ord.

Vc. (-1)

Th.

Cb.

Vla. II (-2)

Vln. IV (-1)

II II sul pont. ord. sul pont. ord.

Vln. II

ord. sfz  $\text{sfz}$  sul pont. ord. sfz  $\text{sfz}$

play X 3

(rall.)

Vln. I (-2) *senza vib.* *1/8* *ppp*

Vln. III (+1)

Vla. I *p* *mf* *f* *p* *sul pont.* *sfz* *p* *ff*

Vc. (-1) *senza vib.* *pizz.* *arco* *flautando* *sul pont.* *pizz.* *pp*

Th.

Cb. *p* *arco* *pizz.* *arco* *pizz.* *arco* *f*

Vla. II (-2) *sul pont.* *ord.* *sempr. flautando* *sfz* *p* *pp*

Vln. IV (-1) *senza vib.* *sul pont.* *ord.* *sul pont.* *sfz* *sfz*

Vln. II *f* *p* *sfz* *p* *sfz*

I

♩ = c.100

play X 3

21

123

Vln. I (-2)

Vln. III (+1)

Vla. I

Vc. (-1)

Th.

Cb.

Vla. II (-2)

Vln. IV (-1)

Vln. II

ord.  
p

ord.  
p

sul pont.  
sfz  
pp

senza vib  
sfz  
ppp

f

pizz.  
f

pizz.  
f

arco  
p

III  
p  
f

arco  
pp

senza vib  
ppp

sul pont.  
f

ff  
pp

ff  
pp

arco flautando  
p  
f

pizz.  
f

arco flautando  
p  
f

arco sul pont.  
f

pp

mf

senza vib  
ppp

f  
p  
f

ord.  
sul pont.  
sfz  
pp

ord.  
p

pizz.  
f

arco  
sfz  
pp

arco  
f

(rall.) - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

22

Vln. I (-2) arco *pizz.* arco play X 2 sul pont. *fp* *fp* *fp* *fp* *ff* play X 3 arco

Vln. III (+1) *pizz.* arco *f* *f* *f* *ff*

Vla. I arco sul pont. ord. sul pont. *p* *f* *p* *f* *fp* *fp* *ff*

Vc. (-1) *p* *f* *p* *p* *ff*

Th. *p* *f* *v* *ff* *pp*

Cb. *pizz.* arco sul pont. *gfz* *p* *p* *f* *p* *p*

Vla. II (-2) *p* *f* *fp* *fp* *ff* *sul pont.* *ord.*

Vln. IV (-1) *pizz.* *f*

Vln. II *pizz.* *f* *fp* *f* *fp* *fp* *ff*

Musical score for orchestra, page 135, measures 1-10. The score includes parts for Vln. I (-2), Vln. III (+1), Vla. I, Vc. (-1), Th., Cb., Vla. II (-2), Vln. IV (-1), and Vln. II. The score features various dynamic markings such as *ppp*, *f*, *ff*, *fp*, *p*, *pp*, *fff*, *ppp*, *ff*, *pp*, *flautando*, *arco flautando senza vib.*, *pizz.*, and *sul pont.*. Measure 1: Vln. I (-2) has a melodic line with slurs and grace notes. Measure 2: Vln. III (+1) enters with a sustained note. Measure 3: Vla. I begins with *flautando*. Measure 4: Vc. (-1) starts with *arco flautando senza vib.*. Measure 5: Th. and Cb. play *ff* followed by *pp*. Measure 6: Vla. II (-2) enters with *flautando*. Measure 7: Vln. IV (-1) plays *arco* and *flautando*. Measure 8: Vln. II plays *sul pont.* Measure 9: Vln. IV (-1) plays *pizz.* Measure 10: Vln. II continues *sul pont.*

(rall.)

play X 4

143

Vln. I (-2)

Vln. III (+1)

Vla. I

Vc. (-1)

Th.

Cb. arco ord.

Vla. II (-2)

Vln. IV (-1) arco II I sul pont. ord.

Vln. II

pizz.  
arco ord. sul pont.  
ord. sul pont.

flautando  
ord.  
sul pont.

sul pont.

(rall.) play X 4

**K** Becoming ecstatically expansive  
 $\text{♩} = \text{c.80}$

25

148

Vln. I (-2)

Vln. III (+1)

Vla. I

Vc. (-1)

Th.

Cb.

Vla. II (-2)

Vln. IV (-1)

Vln. II

*f sempre espress.*

*f marcato*

*ord.*

*arco*

*flautando*

*ff*

*fff sempre*

*pizz*

*arco*

*sul pont.*

*pizz*

*arco*

*pizz*

*arco*

*pizz*

*f sempre espress.*

152 (rall.)

Vln. I (-2)

Vln. III (+1) *p-f*

Vla. I *p-f*

Vc. (-1) *f*, *p-f*, *f*, *p-f*

Th. *f*, *p-ff-pp*, *p*

Cb. *ord.*, *p-f*

Vla. II (-2) *sul pont.*, *f*, *3*

Vln. IV (-1) *arco*, *pizz*, *arco*, *pizz*

Vln. II

L

♩ = c.70

27

156

Vln. I (-2)

Vln. III (+1)

Vla. I

Vc. (-1)

Th.

Cb.

Vla. II (-2)

Vln. IV (-1)

Vln. II

*ff*

*p* *f*

*ff* *p* *f*

*flautando* *p* *f*

*ord.* *p*

*flautando* *p* *ff*

*ff* *pp* *p*

*sul pont.* *p* *f*

*flautando* *p* *f*

*ff* *pp* *p*

*ff* *3*

*arco* *p* *f*

*pizz* *fff*

*arco* *p* *f*

*pizz* *fff*

*arco* *p* *f*

*ff*

L

molto rall.  
molto sul pont. with fast,  
light bow strokes

*ff*

Vln. I (-2)

Vln. III (+1)

Vla. I

Vc. (-1)

Th.

Cb.

Vla. II (-2)

Vln. IV (-1)

Vln. II

5

164 sempre flautando, sempre l.v.

Vln. I (-2)

*psempre*

Vln. III (+1)

sempre flautando, sempre l.v.

*psempre*

Vla. I

sempre flautando, sempre l.v.

*psempre*

Vc. (-1)

Always slur glissandi on the natural harmonics

*f* — *p*      *f* — *f*      *p*      *f* — *f*

Th.

*p* — *f*      *f* — *p*      *p* — *f*      *f* — *p*

Sul A  
Cb.

Always slur glissandi on the natural harmonics

*f* — *p*      *f* — *f*      *f* — *p*

Vla. II (-2)

sempre flautando, sempre l.v.

*psempre*

Vln. IV (-1)

sempre flautando, sempre l.v.

*psempre*

slide between harmonics

Vln. II

sempre flautando, sempre l.v.

*psempre*

168

Vln. I (-2)

Vln. III (+1)

Vla. I

Vc. (-1) *p*

Th.

Cb.

Vla. II (-2)

Vln. IV (-1)

Vln. II

This musical score page contains nine staves of music for a string quartet. The instruments are Vln. I (-2), Vln. III (+1), Vla. I, Vc. (-1), Th., Cb., Vla. II (-2), Vln. IV (-1), and Vln. II. The key signature is A major (no sharps or flats). The time signature is common time. Measure 168 begins with Vln. I (-2) playing sixteenth-note patterns with grace notes. Vln. III (+1) follows with eighth-note patterns with grace notes. Vla. I plays sustained notes. Vc. (-1) has sustained notes with dynamics 'p' and 'f'. Th. and Cb. also have sustained notes with dynamics 'f' and 'p'. Vla. II (-2) and Vln. IV (-1) play eighth-note patterns with grace notes. Vln. II plays sustained notes. The score uses various dynamics like *p* (piano), *f* (fortissimo), and *z* (acciaccatura).

172

Vln. I (-2) flautando *p*

Vln. III (+1) II III flautando *p* flautando *p*

Vla. I sul tasto [Vibrato is proportional to dynamics ranging from senza vib. at *ppp* to molto vib. at *f*] ord.

Vc. (-1) *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

Th. *p* *f* *p* *f*

Cb. *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

Vla. II (-2) sul tasto [Vibrato is proportional to dynamics ranging from senza vib. at *ppp* to molto vib. at *f*] ord.

Vln. IV (-1) *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

Vln. II

176

Vln. I (-2)

p f p f p f

Vln. III (+1)

p f

Vla. I

sul pont. ppp f molto sul pont. f

Vc. (-1)

I f IV p f f p

Th.

f p f f p

Cb.

f p f f p

Vla. II (-2)

sul pont. ppp f molto sul pont. f

Vln. IV (-1)

flautando p f

Vln. II

p f

## O

Ethereal, glistening

*Always slur glissandi on the natural harmonics*

180

Vln. I (-2)

I II III IV

Vln. III (+1)

III IV

ord. I IV

Vla. I

Alway slur glissandi on the natural harmonics

Vc. (-1)

Th.

Cb.

Vla. II (-2)

ord. II I

II II

Vln. IV (-1)

I III IV I

Vln. II

I IV I IV

183

Vln. I (-2)

I  
IV  
I  
IV  
I  
IV

Vln. III (+1)

III 8<sup>wu</sup>  
II 8<sup>wu</sup>  
IV 8<sup>wu</sup>  
II 8<sup>wu</sup>  
IV 8<sup>wu</sup>  
II 8<sup>wu</sup>

Vla. I

I  
V  
II  
V  
II  
V

Vc. (-1)

f  
p  
f  
p  
f  
p

Th.

f  
p  
f  
p  
f  
p

Cb.

f  
p  
f  
p  
f  
p

Vla. II (-2)

II  
IV  
II  
IV

Vln. IV (-1)

IV 8<sup>wu</sup>  
I 8<sup>wu</sup>  
III 8<sup>wu</sup>  
IV 8<sup>wu</sup>  
III 8<sup>wu</sup>  
IV 8<sup>wu</sup>  
V  
IV

Vln. II

I  
V  
II  
V  
II  
V  
I  
V

186

Vln. I (-2)

I

Vln. III (+1)

Vla. I

Vc. (-1)

Th.

Cb.

Vla. II (-2)

Vln. IV (-1)

Vln. II

**Like distant bells chiming**accent indicates ***fp*** type attack within  
the notated dynamic context

Vln. I (-2)

Vln. III (+1)

Vla. I

Vc. (-1)

pizz.

*f dolce*

Th.

*fp*

Cb.

*p*

*f*

Vla. II (-2)

II

Vln. IV (-1)

Vln. II

*p*

*f*

*pp*

*f*

*f*

*p*

*f*

*pppp*

*f*

*p*

*f*

*pppp*

*f*