Short Stories

Jonathan Marmor

Commissioned by

The Listen/Space Commissions for MUSIC FROM LISTEN/SPACE

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Instructions

The instructions and rhythm notation conventions used are intended to force the performers to agree on a unique performance practice. You'll need to work through how the ornaments are paced and other rhythmic details as a group in person.

It's in fifteen 25-80 second movements, separated by double bar lines. They can be recorded separately, but should be edited together so the melody part of the next movement starts right when the fermata of the previous movement ends.

There are two instrument groups: Melody and Rhythm Section. The Melody alternates between wind instrument soloists and two wind instruments playing in unison or octaves. The Rhythm Section consists of pizzicato Bass, Vibraphone, and Violin throughout. Two other wind instruments join the Rhythm Section every other phrase.

Dynamics:

The Melody part should always be louder than and clearly distinct from the Rhythm Section. Throughout the whole piece, alternating phrases should lilt between quieter and louder, but transitions shouldn't be abrupt. When the melody is played by two instruments and there are two additional winds playing with the rhythm section the ensemble sound should be louder.

Rhythm:

The ensemble should play together, but the rhythm should be fluid, without a strong pulse, and with a tempo that expands and contracts in response to the shape of the musical content.

Check out the tracks in this playlist to get the feel of the rhythms of the accompaniment and solos:

https://play.spotify.com/user/jmrmr/playlist/1ZPDtj0Nv3XhMDDW21mEVX.

This track is the best example of rhythms for the accompaniment parts, especially the bass and vibraphone:

https://soundcloud.com/jonathanmarmor/013c?in=jonathanmarmor/sets/chords.

Melodies in winds:

- Entire phrases can be moved up or down an octave.
- Ornaments should be played quickly.
- A note and all the ornaments that precede it, or two notes and the ornaments between them, should be played as a single gesture.
- It's up to you whether to play the ornaments on the beat, before the beat, or in between. But when you are playing in unison with someone else you need to play it together, so you'll likely need to decide how to play the phrase ahead of time.
- Rhythms should be fluid and float on top of the rest of the ensemble, as long as the chord changes line up with the right spot in the melody.

Instructions, continued

Violin, and Winds when you have a dyad written:

- Play one of the two pitches, or alternate between the two.
- Rhythm options:
 - Sustain a pitch.
 - Pulse on one pitch two to five notes per quarter note, somewhat steadily, constantly slightly changing tempo, rarely or never in time with quarters, eighths, eighth note triplets, or sixteenths.
 - Alternate between the two pitches using a similar rhythm as described above.
- One option for the Winds is to imitate the rhythm and phrasing of the Violin.

Violin:

- You are part of the rhythm section, along with the bass and vibraphone.
- It might be best to use a mute or stand far away from the rest of the ensemble. Figure it out in rehearsals.

Vibraphone:

- Arpeggiate the chords.
- Sweeping up and down.
- 4 mallets, if that's comfortable.
- Strike two notes at once when possible, both in one hand, if possible.
- Out of time.
- Play two to five notes per quarter note, somewhat steadily, constantly slightly changing tempo, rarely or never in time with quarters, eighths, eighth note triplets, or sixteenths.
- Open and sustaining for the duration of each notated chord.
- Pedal at every chord change, but try to carry over notes from the previous chord if possible.

Bass:

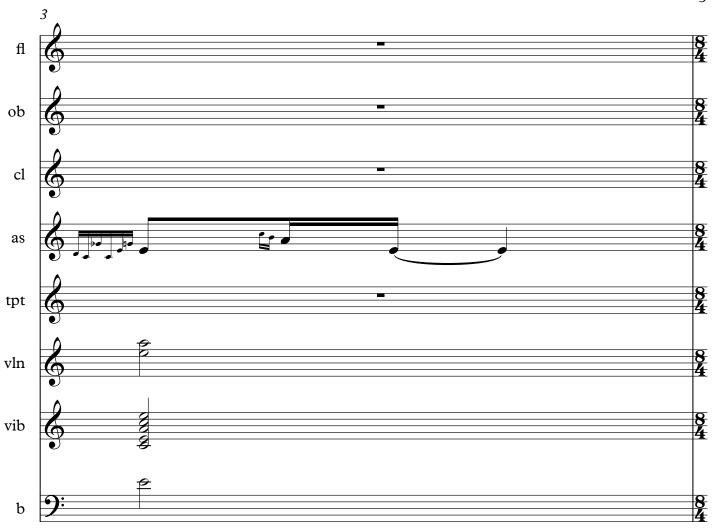
- Pizzicato throughout.
- Rhythm: Pulse two to five notes per quarter note, somewhat steadily, constantly slightly changing tempo, rarely or never in time with quarters, eighths, eighth note triplets, or sixteenths.

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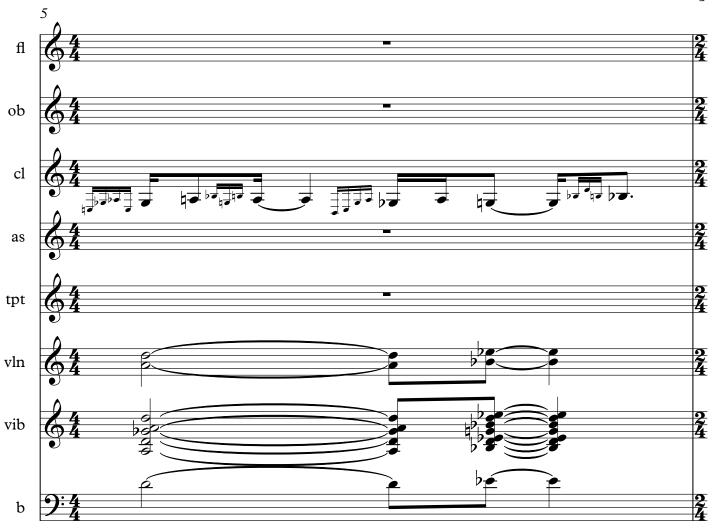
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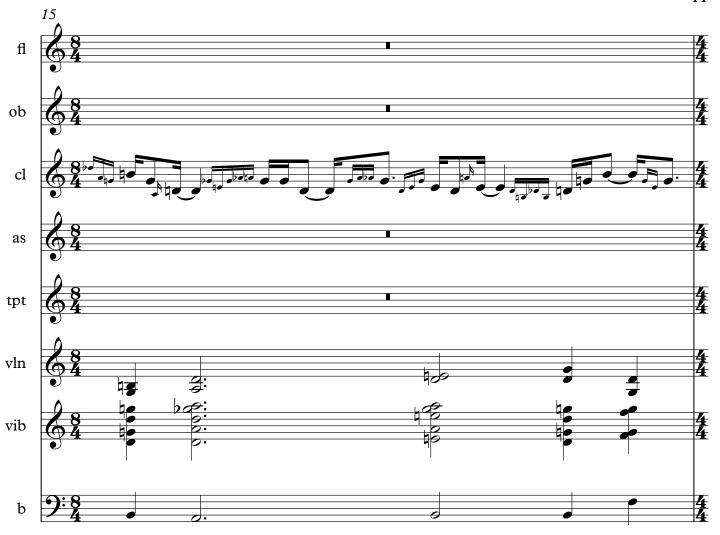




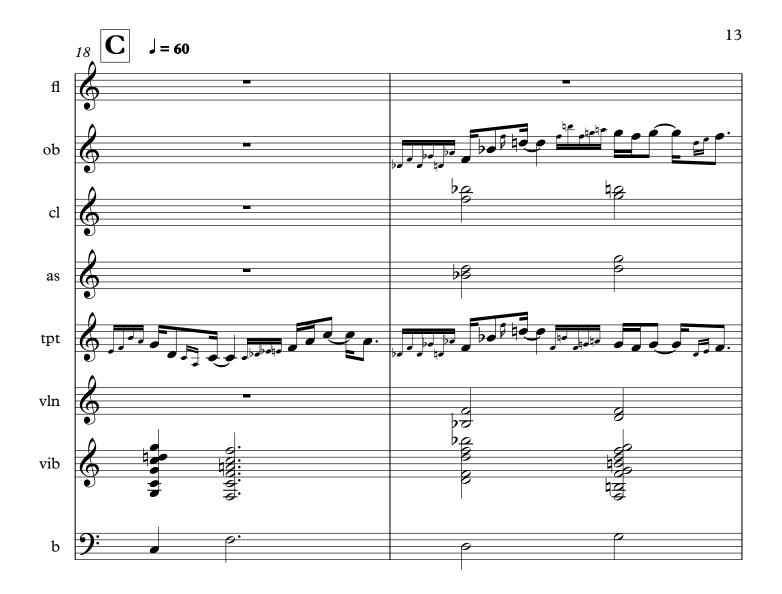


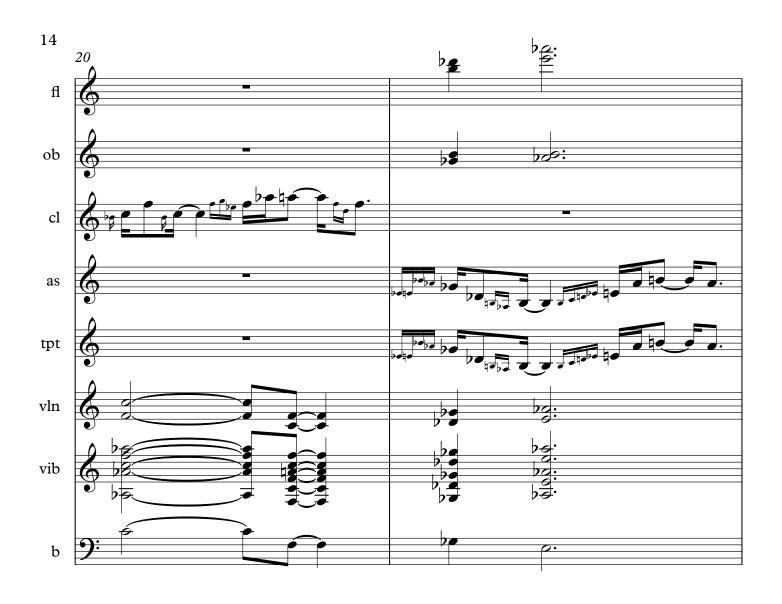






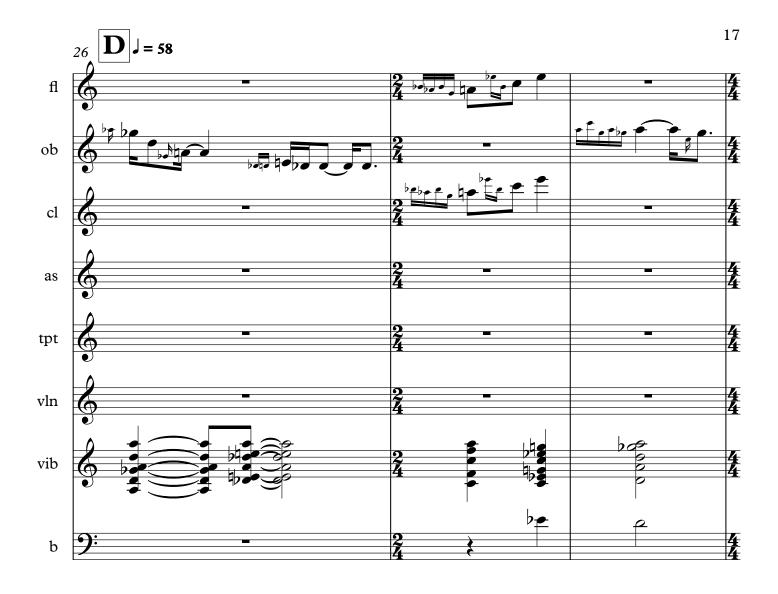




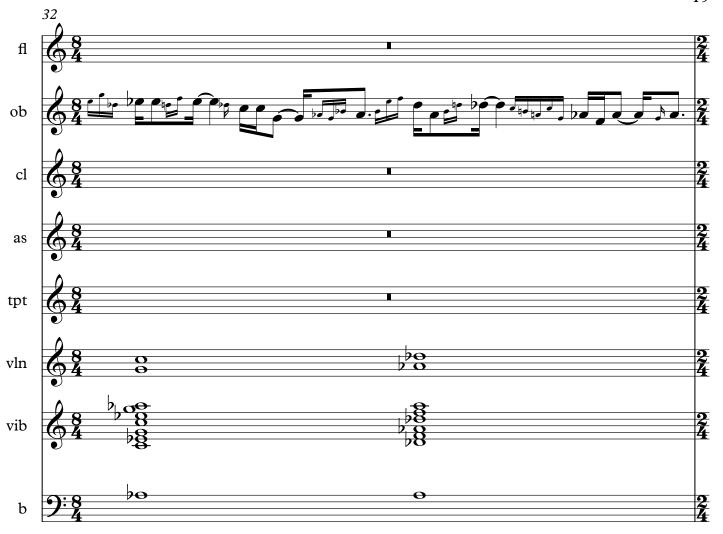














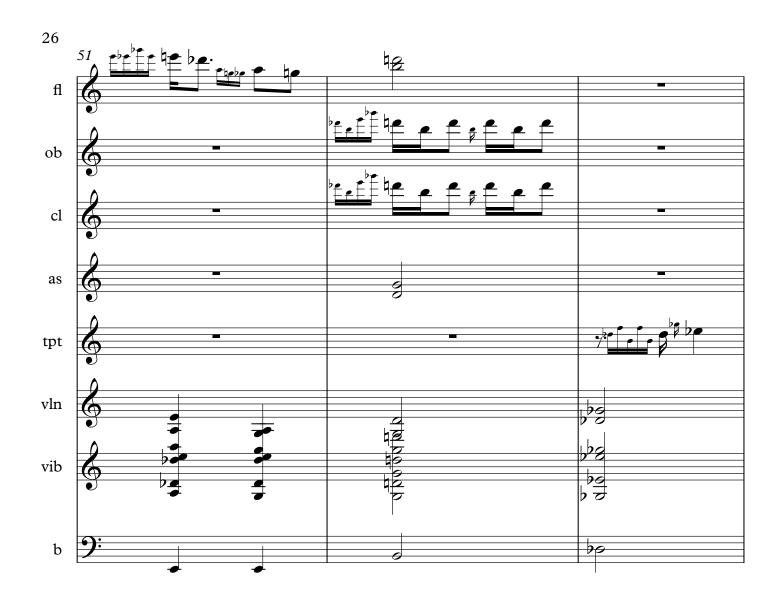




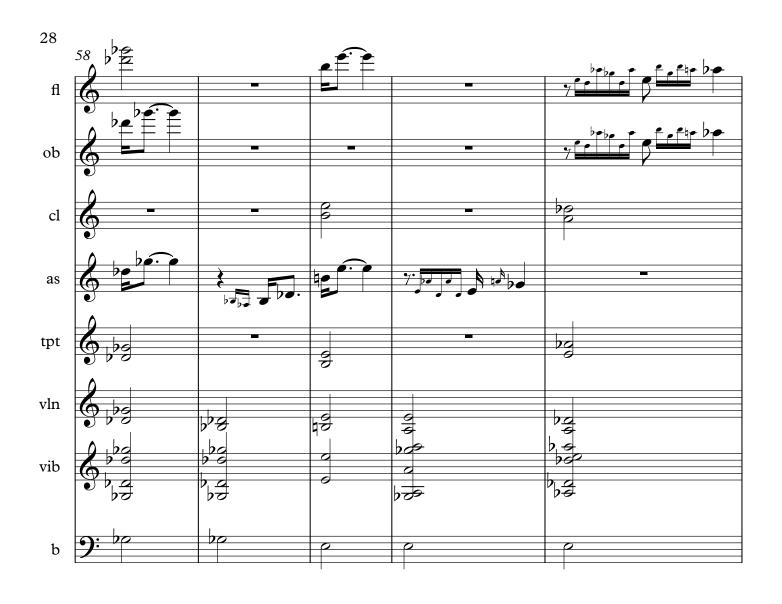


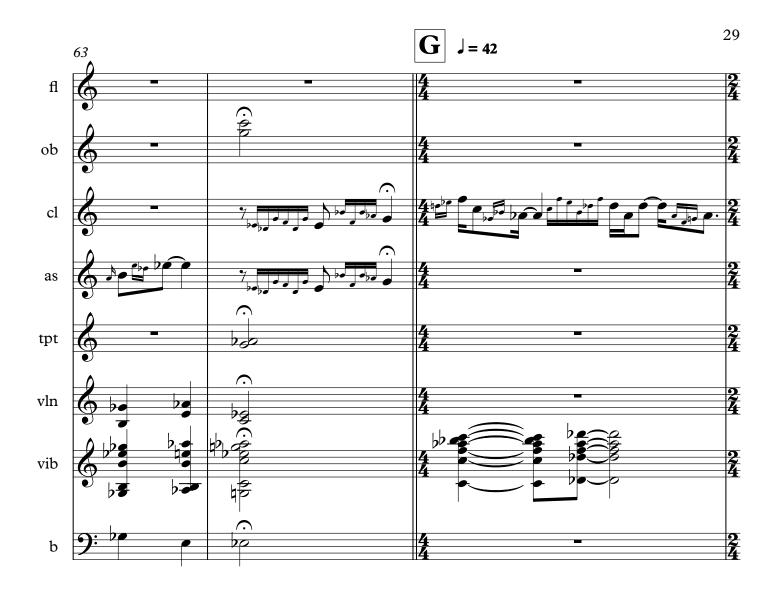






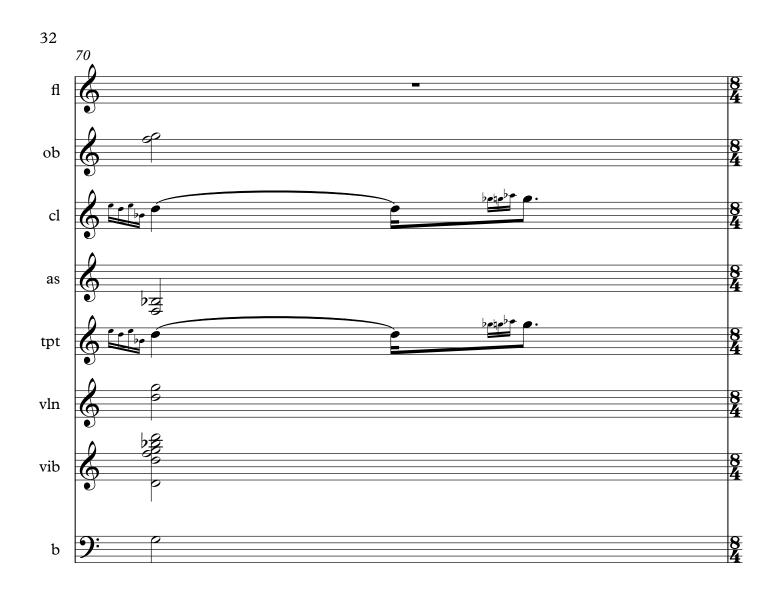














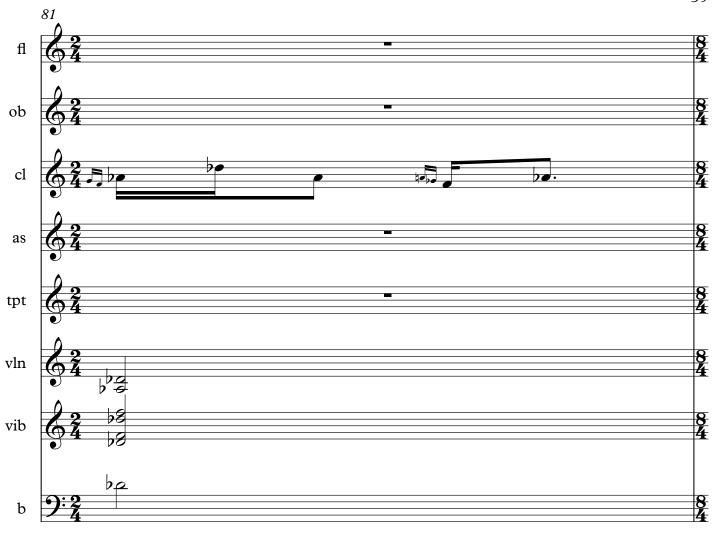






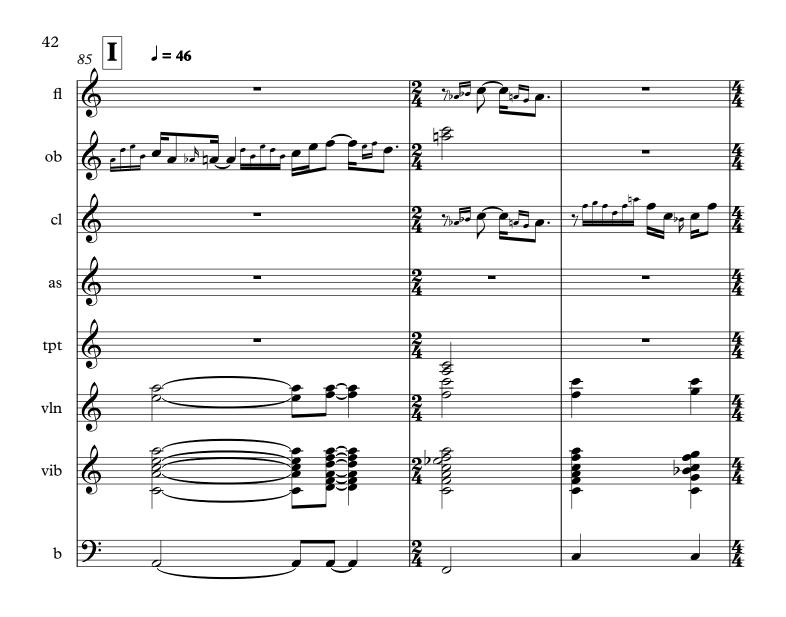










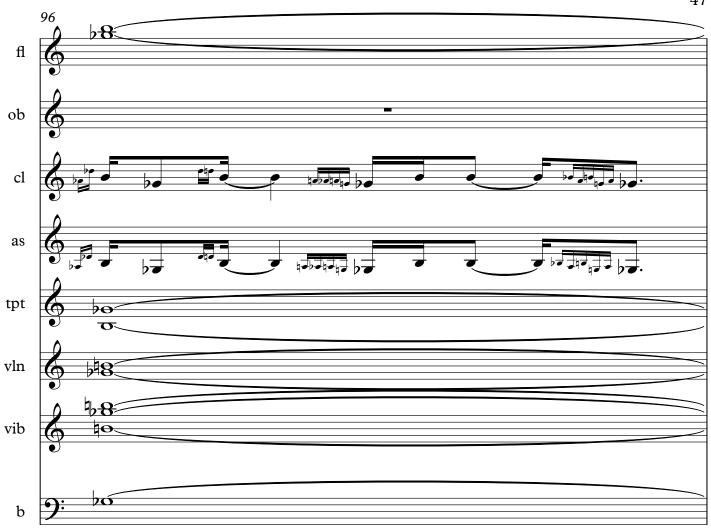




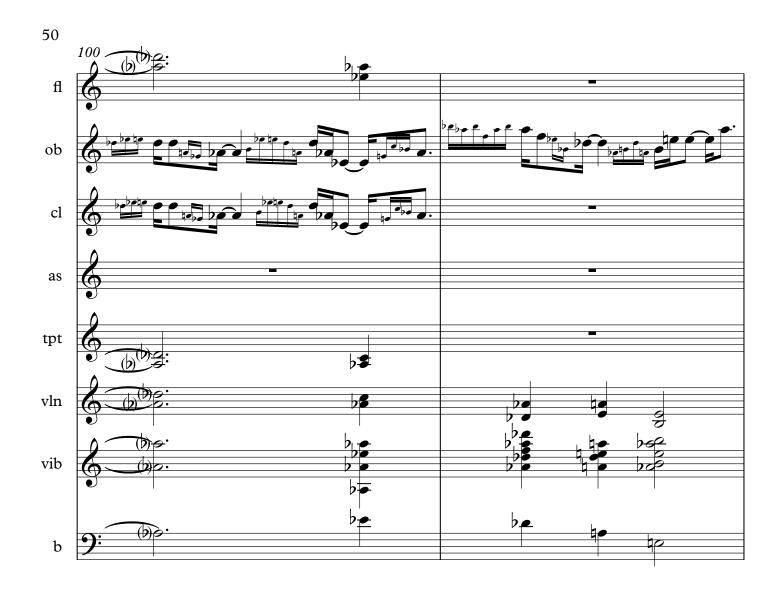






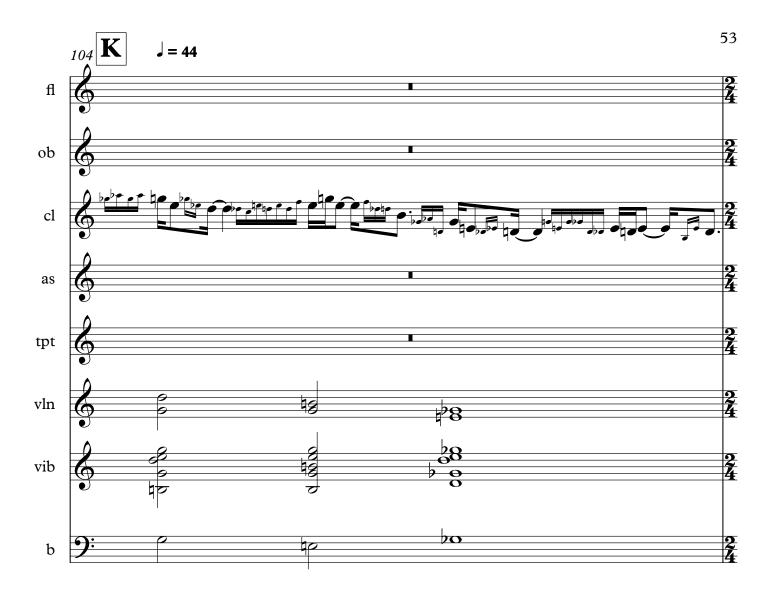




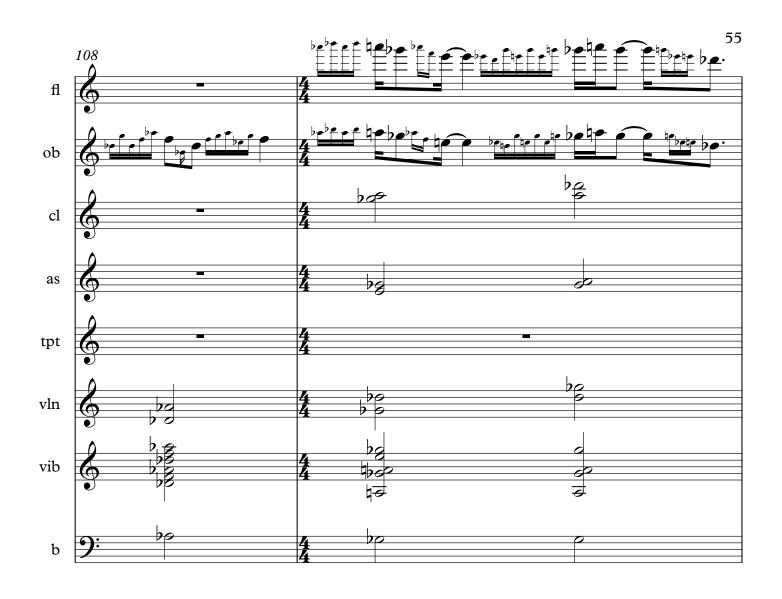












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