Invisible Cities (ii):
ARMILLA

for
Viola duet

Composed by
JOSIAH WOLF OBERHOLTZER

2015

PREFACE

1

Whether Armilla is like this because it is unfinished or because it has been demolished, whether the cause is some enchantment or only a whim, I do not know. The fact remains that it has no walls, no ceilings, no floors: it has nothing that makes it seem a city except the water pipes that rise vertically where the houses should be and spread out horizontally where the floors should be: a forest of pipes that end in taps, shouwers, spouts, overflows. Against the sky a lavabo's white stands out, or a bathtub, or some other porcelain, like late fruit still hanging from the boughs. You would think that the plumbers had finished their job and gone away before the bricklayers arrived; or else their hydraulic systems, indestructable, had survived a catastrophe, an earthquake, or the corrosion of termites.

Abandoned before or after it was inhabited, Armilla cannot be called deserted. At any hour, raising your eyes among the pipes, you are likely to glimpse a young woman, or many young women, slender, not tall of stature, luxuriating in the bathtubs or arching their backs under the showers suspended in the void, washing or drying or perfuming themselves, or combing their long hair at a mirror. In the sun, the threads of water fanning from the showers glisten, the jets of the taps, the spurts, the splases, the sponges' suds.

I have come to this explaination: the streams of water channeled in the pipes of Armilla have remained in th posession of nymphs and naiads. Accustomed to traveling along underground veins, they found it easy to enter the new aquatic realm, to burst from multiple fountains, to find new mirrors, new games, new ways of enjoying the water. Their invasion may have driven out the human beings, or Armilla may have been built by humans as a votive offering to win the favor of the nymphs, offended at the misuse of the waters. In any case, now they seem content, these maidens: in the morning you hear them singing.

- Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*

2

The dunes ran inland, low and grassy, for half a mile or so, and then there were lagoons, thick with sedge and saltreeds, and beyond those, low hills lay yellow-brown and empty out of sight. Beautiful and desolate was Selidor. Nowhere on it was there any mark of man, his work or habitation. There were no beasts to be seen, and the reed-filled lakes bore no flocks of gulls or wild geese or any bird.

- Ursula Le Guin, *The Farthest Shore*

3 Bow contact points

The current position along the bow as it contacts the strings is indicated with fractions, where 0/1 indicates the frog, and 1/1 indicates the tip of the bow. Continuous bowing is shown by lines connecting bow contact fractions.

4 Dynamics

Dynamics are always in terms of effort, not effect. When bowing very quickly and with strong dynanic, the effect should be a traditional *forte*. Likewise, when bowing slowly and with a light dynamic, the effect should be a traditional *piano*. Slow bowing with strong dynamic should result in various colors of scratch, while fast bowing with light pressure should give various qualities of flautando (depending of course on where on the string the bow is contacting).

5 String contact points

D.P. Dietro ponticello: behind the bridge.

M.S.P.
Molto sul ponticello

S.P. Sul ponticello

Ord.
Ordinario

S.T. Sul tasto

M.S.T.
Molto sul tasto

When bowing behind the bridge, the fingering staff switches to percussion clef. The behind-the-bridge string to bow on are given by the four spaces of the five-line-staff, with string *IV* being the lowest space and *I* the highest.

6 Other techniques

Across-the-string tremoli
Indicated by traditional tremolo hashes on the bow tablature's rhythm staff

Along-the-string tremoli
Indicated by zigzag bow tablature glissandi.

Thrown bow
Indicated by dashed bow tablature glissandi

Pizzicati
Indicated with a cross notehead in the tablature staff.

Accents
Accents in the bow tablature staff indicate a sudden staccato increase in bow pressure.

Tremoli, both across- and along-the-string, should be very tight. When the two techniques appear simultaneously, the resulting motion is tightly circular bowing.

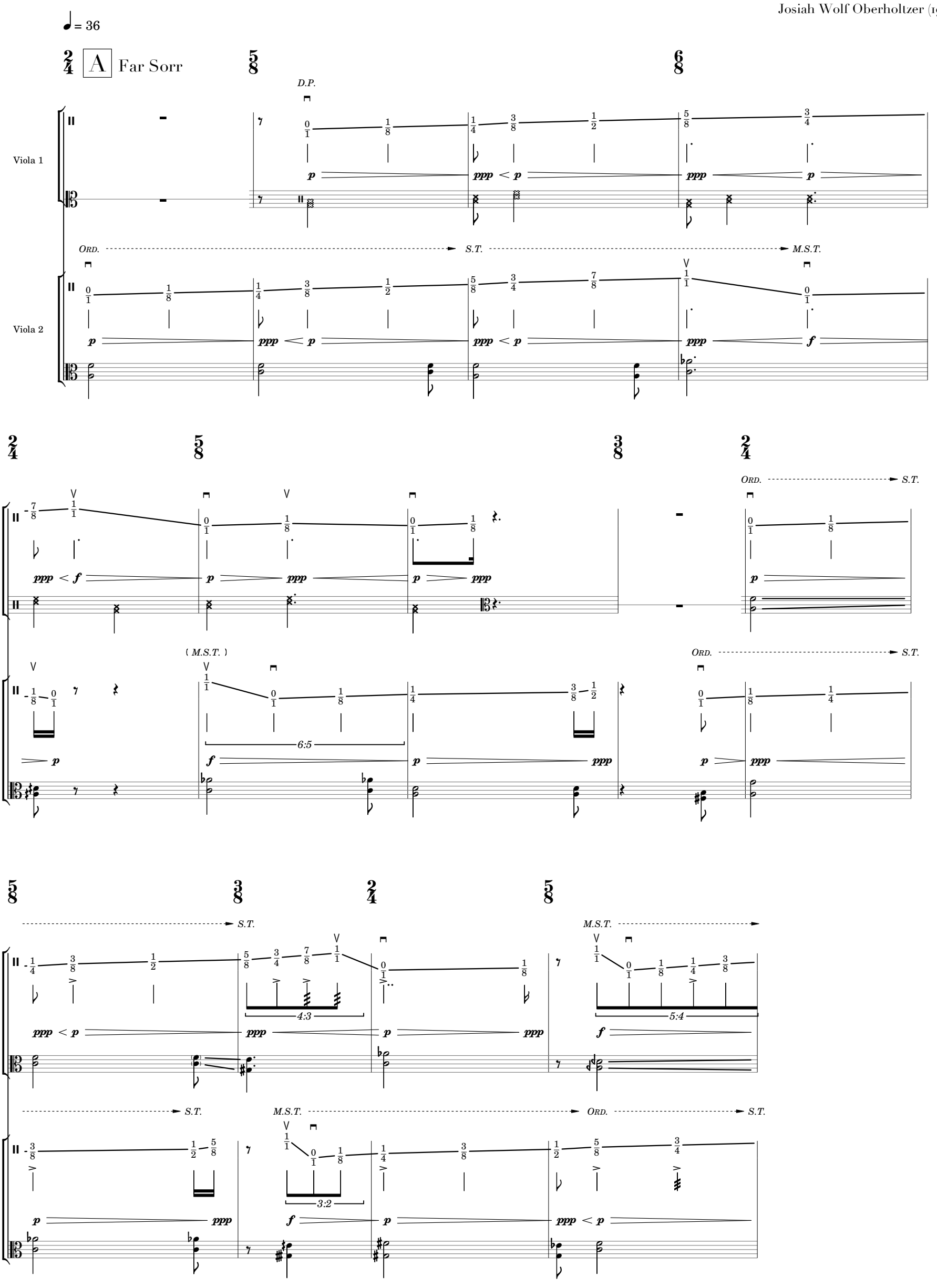
Invisible Cities (i):

ARMILLA

(a botanical survey of the uninhabited southern isles)

for Elizabeth Weisser and John Pickford Richards

Josiah Wolf Oberholtzer (1984)



14

Va. 1

Va. 2

Ord.

S.T.

M.S.T.

Pizz.

4:3

6:5

4:5

5:4

18

22

= 72

B Selidor (i)

(Ord.)

S.P.

3:2

(Pizz.) (Pizz.)

(Pizz.)

(Pizz.) (Pizz.)

♩ = 108

27

C Wellogy

Va. 1

Va. 2

32

37

41

♩ = 36

D The Long Dune (i)

M.S.T. S.T. (S.T.) M.S.P

Va. 1

ppp p mp p ppp mf

Va. 2

M.S.T. S.P. S.T. D.P.

p ppp mp ppp p 4:5 ppp

45

D.P.

Va. 1

4:5 4:5 3:2 4:5

p ppp p ppp p

Va. 2

6:5 4:5 6:5

f p ppp p ppp

49

(D.P.)

Va. 1

ppp f 3:2 f p ppp

Va. 2

4:5 3:2

p ppp f p ppp

54

Va. 1

Va. 2

(D.P.)

58

Va. 1

Va. 2

(D.P.)

ORD. S.T. M.S.T.

62

Va. 1

Va. 2

(D.P.)

M.S.T.

(M.S.T.) ORD.

66

Va. 1

Va. 2

(D.P.)

ORD.

S.T.

ORD.

70

ORD.

S.T.

M.S.T.

S.T.

M.S.T.

= 72

74

E Selidor (ii)

ORD.

(ORD.)

S.P.

ORD.

(ORD.)

M.S.P

(M.S.P)

3:2

4:5

ORD.

(ORD.)

M.S.P

ORD.

S.P.

ORD.

6:5

6:5

4:5

79

Va. 1

Va. 2

ORD. S.P. ORD. (ORD.) M.S.P ORD.

3:2

S.P. ORD. (ORD.) M.S.P

♩ = 108

F The Isle of the Ear

83

Va. 1

Va. 2

(ORD.) M.S.P ORD. S.P. S.T. ORD. M.S.P S.T.

88

Va. 1

Va. 2

ORD. M.S.T. ORD.

4:5 6:5 4:5

92

Va. 1

Va. 2

S.T. M.S.T. ORD. S.T. S.P.

3:2 4:5

96

♩ = 72

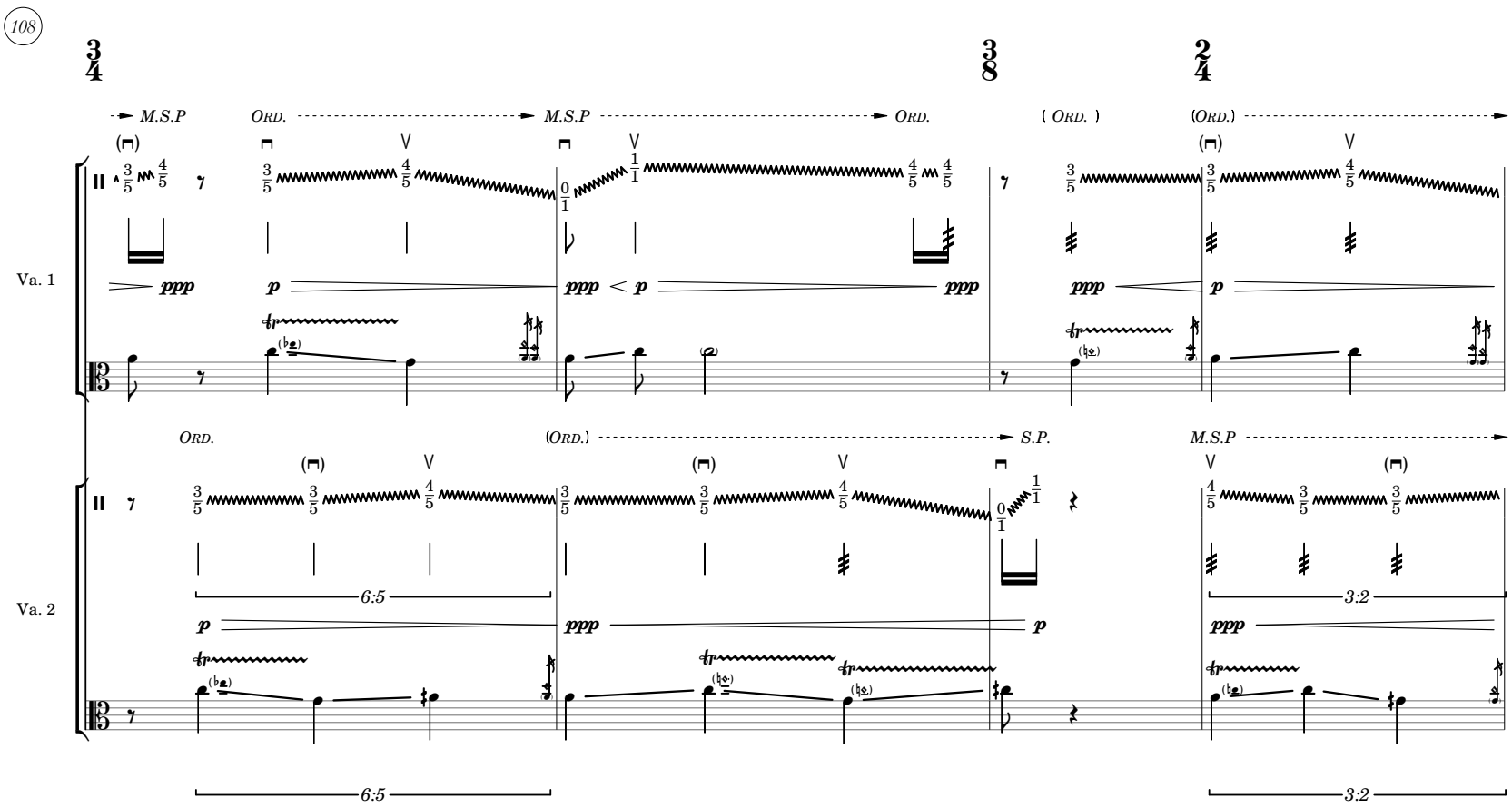
G Selidor (iii)

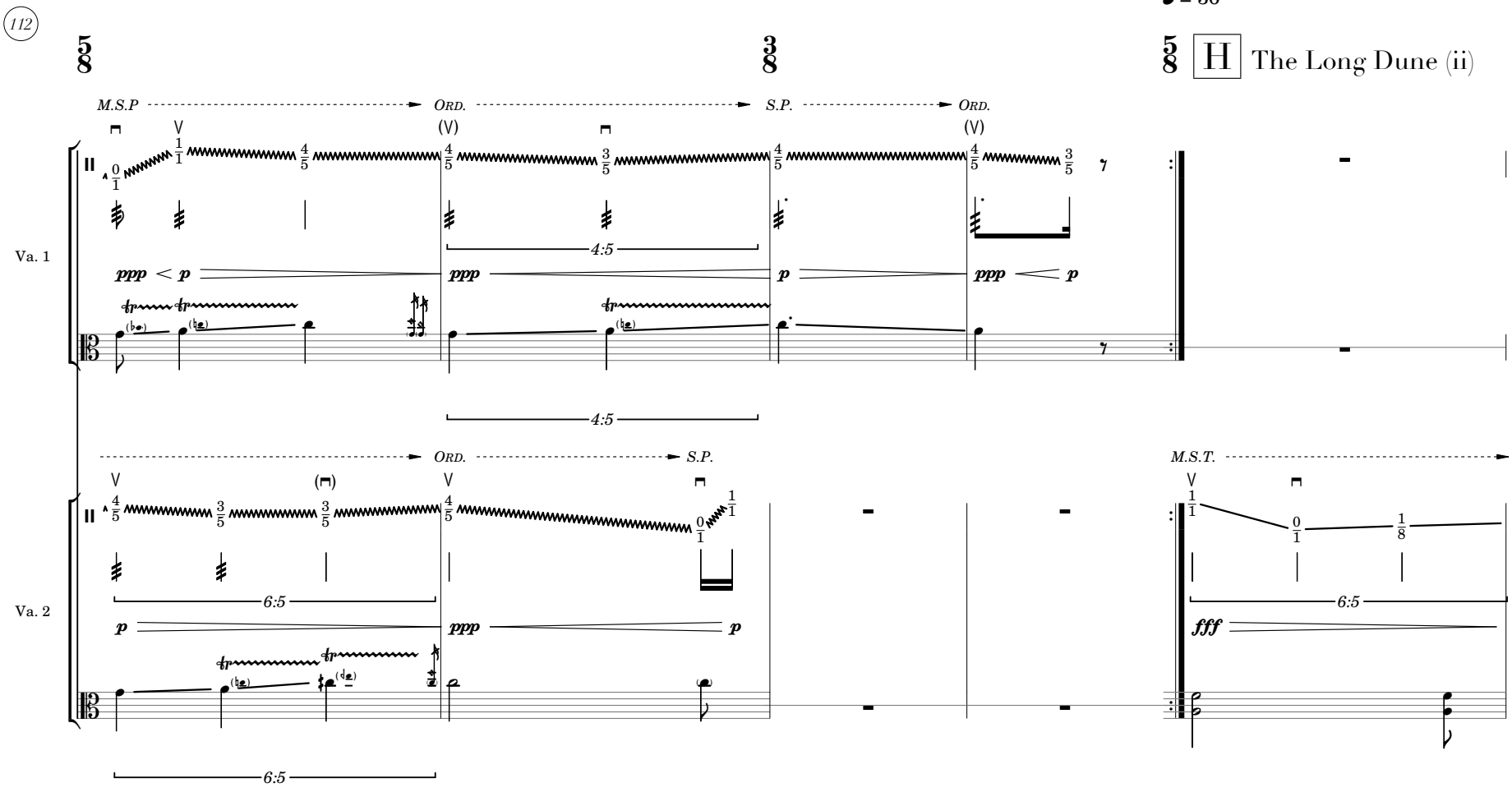
Va. 1

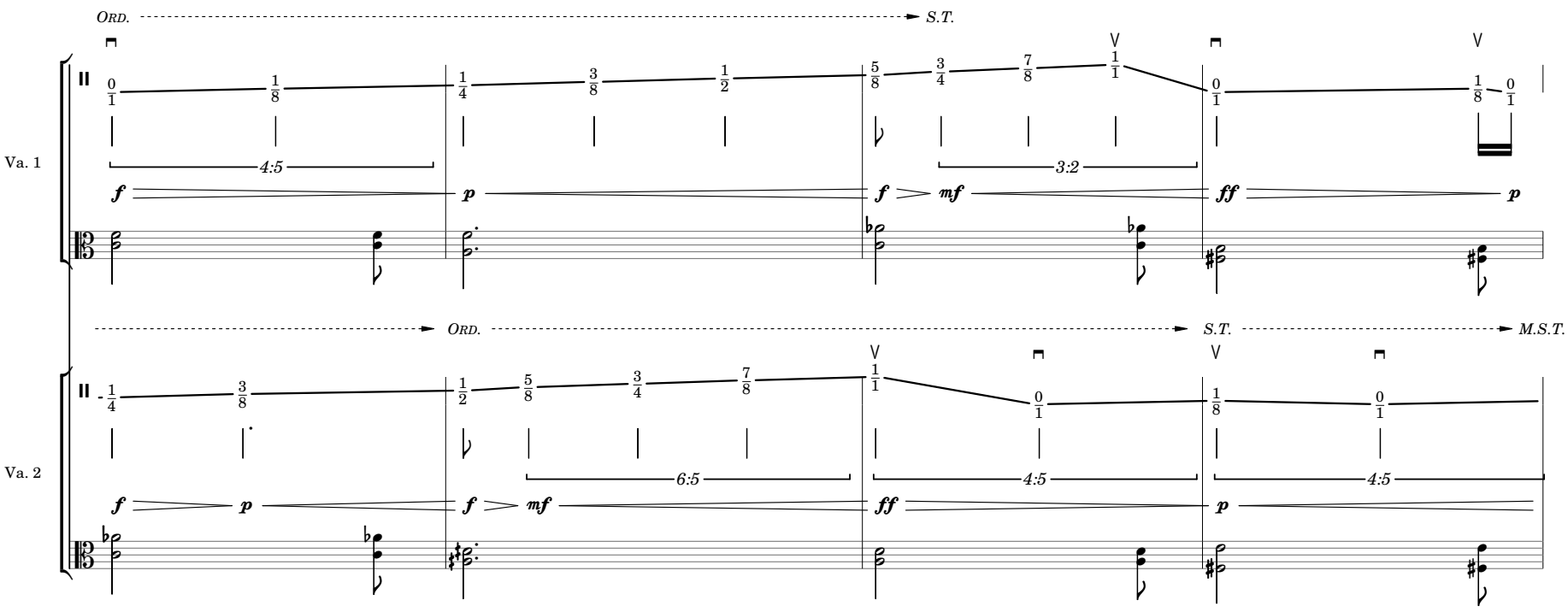
Va. 2

101

105


Va. 1
Va. 2
M.S.P
ORD.
M.S.P
ORD.
(ORD.)
(ORD.)
ORD.
(ORD.)
S.P.
M.S.P
6:5
3:2
= 36


H The Long Dune (ii)
Va. 1
Va. 2
M.S.P
ORD.
S.P.
ORD.
ORD.
S.P.
M.S.T.
4:5
6:5


Va. 1
Va. 2
ORD.
S.T.
ORD.
S.T.
M.S.T.
4:5
3:2
6:5
4:5
4:5

121

Va. 1

Va. 2

ORD. S.T. M.S.T. S.T. ORD.

4:5

126

Va. 1

Va. 2

M.S.T. S.T. M.S.T. S.T. M.S.T. D.P.

6:5 3:2

130

Va. 1

Va. 2

M.S.T. PIZZ. (PIZZ.) (PIZZ.)

Portland, OR
Fresh Meadows, NY
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Scores available from the composer at
www.josiahwolfoberholtzer.com

€25 / $35