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Invisible Cities:  
ERSILIA

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*for*  
Chamber Orchestra

*Composed by*  
JOSIAH WOLF OBERHOLTZER

2015

# PREFACE

## 1

*In Ersilia, to establish the relationships that sustain the city’s life, the inhabitants stretch strings from the corners of the houses, white or black or gray or black-and-white according to whether they mark a relationship of blood, of trade, authority, agency. When the strings become so numerous that you can no longer pass among them, the inhabitants leave: the houses are dismantled; only the strings and their supports remain.*

*From a mountainside, camping with their household goods, Ersilia’s refugees look at the labyrinth of taut strings and poles that rise in the plain. That is the city of Ersilia still, and they are nothing.*

*They rebuild Ersilia elsewhere. They weave a similar pattern of strings which they would like to be more complex and at the same time more regular than the other. Then they abandon it and take themselves and their houses still farther away.*

*Thus, when traveling in the territory of Ersilia, you come upon the ruins of abandoned cities, without the walls which do not last, without the bones of the dead which the wind rolls away: spiderwebs of intricate relationships seeking a form.*

- Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*

## 2

*“Are we still in the South Reach?”*

*“Reach? No. The islands –” The chief moved his slender black hand in an arc, no more than a quarter of the compass, north to east. “The islands are there,” he said. “All the islands.” Then showing all the evening sea before them, from north through west to south, he said, “The sea.”*

*“What land are you from, lord?”*

*“No land. We are the Children of the Open Sea.”*

*Arren looked at his keen face. He looked about him at the great raft with its temple and its tall idols, each carved from a single tree, great god-figures mixed of dolphin, fish, man, and seabird; at the people busy at their work, weaving, carving, fishing, cooking on raised platforms, tending babies; at the other rafts, seventy at least, scattered out over the water in a great circle perhaps a mile across. It was a town: smoke rising in thin wisps from distant houses, the voices of children high on the wind. It was a town, and under its floors was the abyss.*

- Ursula LeGuin, *The Farthest Shore*

## 3 Instrumentation

- Flute
- Bass clarinet
- Oboe
- Baritone saxophone
- Acoustic guitar
- Piano
- Percussion
  - bamboo wind chimes
  - four toms
  - five wood blocks
  - snare drum
  - marimba
  - crotales, two octaves
  - tam-tam
  - bass drum
- Violin
- Viola
- Cello
- Contrabass

## 4 Performance notes

Six players – flute, bass clarinet, oboe, violin, viola and cello – receive a shaker – caxixi, maraca or similar. Four players – guitar, piano, percussion and contrabass – receive a chromatic pitch pipe – a circular harmonic-like instrument generally used for tuning vocal groups.

The shakers should be placed on or suspended from their respective performer’s music stands, or wherever convenient.

The pitch-pipes should be played by inhaling or exhaling – as indicated – through fully half of the circumference of the instrument, creating a rich cluster.

For all winds, a +-symbol indicates slap tonguing.

For guitar, the coda symbol indicates a percussive damping of the strings.

Piano plays with pedal to their discretion throughout the first four sections of the piece. The sound should be generally dry, although some pedal should be used when appropriate for phrasing and blending, especially on tremolo passages. The sustain pedal should remain fully depressed for the entirety of section D. Inside-piano glissandi are notated proportional to the lower interior portion of the instrument – from the lowest string up to the first cross-bar – and should be played with the fingertip.

Percussion should use hard sticks on toms, woodblocks, snares and crotales, and softer mallets on marimba, bass drum and tam-tam (when ergonomic to do so).

All mordents and trills are a major 2nd, unless otherwise specified. All tremolos are unmeasured and should evoke a cloud-like texture.

*Invisible Cities (iii):*  
**ERSILIA**  
*(a botanical survey of the uninhabited northeastern isles)*  
*for Ensemble Dal Niente*

Josiah Wolf Oberholtzer (1984)

♩ = 96  
4/4 Komokome

83

Flute

Oboe

Bass Clarinet

Baritone Saxophone

Pitch Pipes

Guitar

Pitch Pipes

Piano

Pitch Pipes

Percussion

Violin

Viola

Cello

Pitch Pipes

Contrabass

shaker

ppp

p

f

7:6

mf

fff

snare

8va

7:6

mf

p

fff

p

48

44

150

48

This musical score is for the piece "The Great Wall" by John Williams, specifically measures 4, 8, and 7. The score is written for a large orchestra and includes the following parts:

- Fl.** (Flute): Measures 4 and 8 show a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest. Measure 7 shows a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest.
- Ob.** (Oboe): Measures 4 and 8 show a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest. Measure 7 shows a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest.
- Bass cl.** (Bass Clarinet): Measures 4 and 8 show a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest. Measure 7 shows a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest.
- Bar. sax.** (Baritone Saxophone): Measures 4 and 8 show a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest. Measure 7 shows a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest.
- Gt.** (Guitar): Measures 4 and 8 show a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest. Measure 7 shows a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest.
- Pf.** (Piano): Measures 4 and 8 show a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest. Measure 7 shows a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest.
- Perc.** (Percussion): Measures 4 and 8 show a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest. Measure 7 shows a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest.
- Vn.** (Violin): Measures 4 and 8 show a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest. Measure 7 shows a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest.
- Va.** (Viola): Measures 4 and 8 show a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest. Measure 7 shows a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest.
- Vc.** (Violoncello): Measures 4 and 8 show a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest. Measure 7 shows a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest.
- Cb.** (Contrabass): Measures 4 and 8 show a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest. Measure 7 shows a melodic line starting on a whole note, followed by a rest.

The score is written in 4/4 time and features a variety of musical notations, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The score is divided into three measures, with measure 4 being the first, measure 8 being the second, and measure 7 being the third. The score is written for a large orchestra and includes the following parts:

4  
8

7  
8

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

shaker

ppp

fp

5:4

mf

f

fff

crotales

snare

[illegible]



[illegible]

150

This musical score is for the piece "The Great Wall" by John Williams. It is a full orchestral score, likely for a film score. The score is written for a large ensemble of instruments, including woodwinds, brass, strings, and percussion. The notation is in standard musical notation, with various dynamics (p, f, ppp, mf) and articulations (accents, slurs, ties) used throughout. The score is divided into measures, with some measures containing multiple staves for different instruments. The overall style is characteristic of John Williams' film music, with a focus on melody and rhythm. The score is presented in a clean, professional layout, with clear notation and easy-to-read dynamics and articulations.

[illegible]

4

150

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

*fp*

*mf*

*ppp*

*fp*

*ppp*

*5:4*

*7:6*

*shaker*

*mf*

*f*

*fp*

*fz*

*mp*

*p*

*mf*

*8va1*

*pp*

*f*

*mp*

*mf*

*fff*

*snare*

*fff*

*f*

*overpressure*

*fff*

*overpressure*

*fff*

*pizz.*

*ppp*

*overpressure*

*fff*

*pizz.*

*3:2*

*ppp*

*pizz.*

*ppp*

*5:4*

*ppp*

*5:4*

48

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

4/4

5

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

shaker

shaker

shaker

shaker

overpressure

overpressure

overpressure

overpressure

snare

toms

ppp

f

mf

mp

ff

fff

5:4

7:6

3:2



$$\frac{4}{8} \qquad \frac{4}{4}$$

48

78

158

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

*p*

*ppp*

*shaker*

*3:2*

*7:6*

*fp*

*8va<sub>1</sub>*

*mf*

*mp*

*p*

*mf*

*pizz.*

*5:4*

*ppp*

*5*

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

snare

overpressure

overpressure

overpressure

8va<sub>1</sub>

3:2

f

ff

fff

fp

ppp

p



Invisible Cities (iii): Ersilia

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.



This musical score is for the piece "The Great Wall" by John Williams. It is a full orchestral score, likely for a film soundtrack. The score is written for a large ensemble of instruments, including woodwinds, brass, percussion, and strings. The notation is in standard musical notation, with various dynamics and articulations. The score is divided into measures, with some measures containing multiple staves for different instruments. The overall style is characteristic of John Williams' orchestral music, with a focus on melody and harmony. The score is written in a major key, and the tempo is marked as "Allegretto". The score is for a full orchestra, including woodwinds, brass, percussion, and strings. The notation is in standard musical notation, with various dynamics and articulations. The score is divided into measures, with some measures containing multiple staves for different instruments. The overall style is characteristic of John Williams' orchestral music, with a focus on melody and harmony. The score is written in a major key, and the tempo is marked as "Allegretto".

$$\frac{4}{8} \qquad \frac{4}{4}$$

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

8

3

7

3:2

7:6

L.V.

windchimes

mf

mp

p

pp

f

ff

fp

8

15

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Pp.

Gt.

Pp.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Pp.

Cb.

*fp*

*f*

*mf*

*f*

*fp*

*inhale*

*fp*

*mp*

*ppp*

*L.V.*

*p*

*sfz*

*fp*

*f*

*5:4*

*mf*

*f*

*mf*

*f*

*5:4*

*crotales*

*ppp*

*ppp*

*ppp*

*fp*

*inhale*

This musical score is for the piece "The Great Wall" by John Williams. It is a full orchestral score, likely for a film soundtrack. The score is written for a large ensemble of instruments, including woodwinds, strings, and percussion. The notation is in standard musical notation, with various dynamics and articulations. The score is divided into measures, with some measures containing complex rhythmic patterns and others being rests. The instruments listed on the left are: Fl. (Flute), Ob. (Oboe), Bass cl. (Bass Clarinet), Bar. sax. (Baritone Saxophone), Gt. (Guitar), Pf. (Piano), Perc. (Percussion), Vn. (Violin), Va. (Viola), Vc. (Violoncello), and Cb. (Contrabass). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, beams, and dynamic markings like *ppp*, *p*, *pp*, *mp*, *p*, *sfz*, *pp*, *f*, *fp*, *ff*, and *mf*. There are also articulation marks like *trm* and *tr*. The score is written in a single system, with each instrument part on its own staff. The overall style is that of a professional musical score, with clear notation and a focus on the musical content.

This musical score is for the piece "The Great Wall" by John Williams. It is a full orchestral score, likely for a film score. The instruments listed on the left are: Fl. (Flute), Ob. (Oboe), Bass cl. (Bass Clarinet), Bar. sax. (Baritone Saxophone), Gt. (Guitar), Pf. (Piano), Perc. (Percussion), Vn. (Violin), Va. (Viola), Vc. (Violoncello), and Cb. (Contrabass). The score is written in 2/4 time and features a variety of musical notations, including dynamics (e.g., *mp*, *f*, *pp*, *ff*), articulation (e.g., accents, slurs), and performance instructions (e.g., "windchimes", "marimba", "crotales"). The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines, and the instruments are grouped by horizontal lines. The overall style is characteristic of John Williams' film scores, with a focus on dramatic and emotional expression.

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Pp.

Gt.

Pp.

Pf.

Pp.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Pp.

Cb.

musical score with various instruments and dynamics

This musical score is for the piece "The Great Wall" by John Williams. It is a full orchestral score, likely for a film score. The score is written for a variety of instruments, including woodwinds, strings, and percussion. The notation is in standard musical notation, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a time signature of 4/4. The score is divided into measures, with some measures containing multiple staves for different instruments. The score includes dynamic markings such as *ppp*, *mp*, *p*, *f*, *fff*, *mf*, and *fp*. There are also tempo markings such as *Andante* and *Allegro*. The score is written for a variety of instruments, including Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Bass Clarinet (Bass cl.), Baritone Saxophone (Bar. sax.), Guitar (Gt.), Piano (Pf.), Percussion (Perc.), Violin (Vn.), Viola (Va.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The score is written in a clear and legible style, with a focus on the musical notation and the instruments it is written for.



[illegible]

[illegible]

Vn. *fff* *mp* *fff*  
 Va. *fff* *ppp* *fff*  
 Vc. *ppp* *fff* *fp* *fff*  
 Pp. *overpressure*  
 Cb.

This musical score is for the piece "The Great Wall" by John Williams. It is a full orchestral score, likely for a film soundtrack. The score is written for a large ensemble of instruments, including woodwinds, strings, and percussion. The notation is in standard musical notation, with various dynamics and articulations. The score is divided into measures, with some measures containing complex rhythmic patterns and others being rests. The instruments are listed on the left side of the score, and the corresponding staves are arranged vertically. The score is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a time signature of 4/4. The piece is in the key of B-flat major, which is a common key for film music. The score is a full orchestral score, and it is likely to be used in a film or a concert. The score is written in a clear and professional manner, with all necessary musical notation and markings. The score is a full orchestral score, and it is likely to be used in a film or a concert. The score is written in a clear and professional manner, with all necessary musical notation and markings.

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

7:6 *mf*

8:6 *mp*

*mp*

*ppp*

*ppp*

*ppp*

*p* 3:2 *mf*

*f* 5:4 *mf* *fp* *f*

*mf* 3:2 *mf*

*ppp sfz* *mp* *p sfz* *ppp*

*fp* *f* *mf* *fp*

8va<sub>1</sub> *fp* *f* *mf*

7:6 *f* *mf*

5:4 *f* *mf*

5:4 *f* *mf*

3:2 *f* *p*

windchimes *pp*

marimba *f* *fp*

3:2 *f*

5:4 *f*

marimba *f* *p* 3:2

blocks

6:5 *p* *fp*

*fp* *fff*

*fff* *fp* *fff*

*fff* *fp* *fff*

*p*

*mf* *mp*

*mf*

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Pp.

Gt.

Pp.

Pf.

Pp.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Pp.

Cb.

5:4

3:2

6:4

5:4

3:2

mf

ppp

mf

ppp

mf

inhale

fp

exhale

fp

p

sfz

pp

p

sfz

mf

sfz

inhale

fp

exhale

fp

mf

f

f

3:2

fp

p

fp

inhale

fp

inhale

fp

marimba

ppp

f

fp

fp

fp

fp

fp

fp

fp

fp

This musical score is for the piece "The Great Wall" by John Williams. It is written for a large orchestra and includes the following instruments and parts:

- Fl. (Flute):** Features a single note in the second measure, marked *ppp*.
- Ob. (Oboe):** Features a single note in the second measure, marked *ppp*, and a melodic line in the fourth measure, marked *mf* with a 5:4 ratio.
- Bass cl. (Bass Clarinet):** Features a single note in the second measure, marked *ppp*, and a melodic line in the fourth measure, marked *ppp* with a 3:2 ratio.
- Bar. sax. (Baritone Saxophone):** Features a single note in the second measure, marked *ppp*, and a melodic line in the fourth measure, marked *ppp*.
- Gt. (Guitar):** Features a single note in the second measure, marked *p*, and a melodic line in the fourth measure, marked *p* with a 5:4 ratio.
- Pf. (Piano):** Features a single note in the second measure, marked *pp*, and a melodic line in the fourth measure, marked *pp* with a 5:4 ratio.
- Perc. (Percussion):** Features a single note in the second measure, marked *p*, and a melodic line in the fourth measure, marked *p* with a 5:4 ratio.
- Vn. (Violin):** Features a single note in the second measure, marked *p*, and a melodic line in the fourth measure, marked *mf* with a 5:3 ratio.
- Va. (Viola):** Features a single note in the second measure, marked *ff*, and a melodic line in the fourth measure, marked *mf* with a 5:3 ratio.
- Vc. (Violoncello):** Features a single note in the second measure, marked *ff*, and a melodic line in the fourth measure, marked *p* with a 5:3 ratio.
- Cb. (Contrabass):** Features a single note in the second measure, marked *ppp*, and a melodic line in the fourth measure, marked *ppp*.

The score is written in 4/4 time and includes various dynamic markings such as *ppp*, *pp*, *p*, *mf*, *f*, and *ff*. It also includes performance instructions like "L.V." (Lento) and "5:4" (5/4 time).

This musical score is for the piece "The Great Wall" by John Williams. It is a full orchestral score, likely for a film soundtrack. The score is written for a variety of instruments, including woodwinds, strings, and percussion. The notation is in standard musical notation, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a time signature of 4/4. The score is divided into measures, with dynamic markings (ppp, mp, f, mf, p, pp, fff, fp) and articulation markings (accents, slurs, trills) indicating the performance style. The instruments listed on the left include Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Bass Clarinet (Bass cl.), Baritone Saxophone (Bar. sax.), Guitar (Gt.), Piano (Pf.), Percussion (Perc.), Violin (Vn.), Viola (Va.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The score is a complex arrangement of these instruments, with each part contributing to the overall musical texture. The notation is clear and professional, typical of a high-quality musical score.



48

This musical score is for the piece "The Great Wall" by John Adams. It is a full orchestral score with various instruments. The score is written in 2/4 time and features a complex rhythmic structure with many syncopations and rests. The instrumentation includes Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Bass Clarinet (Bass cl.), Baritone Saxophone (Bar. sax.), Guitar (Gt.), Piano (Pf.), Percussion (Perc.), Violin (Vn.), Viola (Va.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The score is divided into measures, with some measures containing multiple notes and rests. The dynamics range from *pp* (pianissimo) to *fff* (fortississimo). The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and accidentals. The piece is in the key of D major and has a tempo of "Allegro".

♩ = 64

48 C ii

$\text{♩} = 80$

§ D Chemish

This musical score is for the piece "The Great Wall" by John Williams. It is a full orchestral score with the following instruments and parts:

- Fl. (Flute):** Features a melodic line in the first measure, marked *ppp*, and a final measure marked *fp* with a shaker.
- Ob. (Oboe):** Features a melodic line in the first measure, marked *ppp*, and a final measure marked *fp* with a shaker.
- Bass cl. (Bass Clarinet):** Features a melodic line in the first measure, marked *f*, and a final measure marked *fp* with a shaker.
- Bar. sax. (Baritone Saxophone):** Features a melodic line in the first measure, marked *f*, and a final measure marked *f* with a shaker.
- Gt. (Guitar):** Features a melodic line in the first measure, marked *f*, and a final measure marked *mf*.
- Pf. (Piano):** Features a melodic line in the first measure, marked *p*, and a final measure marked *fff*.
- Perc. (Percussion):** Features a melodic line in the first measure, marked *p*, and a final measure marked *f* with a shaker.
- Vn. (Violin):** Features a melodic line in the first measure, marked *f*, and a final measure marked *fp* with a shaker.
- Va. (Viola):** Features a melodic line in the first measure, marked *p*, and a final measure marked *fp* with a shaker.
- Vc. (Violoncello):** Features a melodic line in the first measure, marked *f*, and a final measure marked *fp* with a shaker.
- Cb. (Contrabass):** Features a melodic line in the first measure, marked *ppp*, and a final measure marked *ppp*.

The score is written in 2/4 time and includes various musical notations such as dynamics, articulation, and performance instructions.

[illegible]

4  
4

8  
8

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Pp.

Gt.

Pp.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Pp.

Cb.

shaker

exhale

L.V

exhale

inside

inside

mf

mf

shaker

inhale

5:4

p

fp

mf

fp

mp

fp

p

pp

p

pp

f

exhale

mf

inside

mf

shaker

inhale

[illegible]

[illegible]

7

8

4

Fl. *shaker* *fp*

Ob. *shaker* *fp* *shaker* *fp*

Bass cl. *shaker* *fp*

Bar. sax. *fp* *mp* *p*

Pp. *inhale* *fp*

Gt. *p* *sfz* *p* *sfz*

Pp. *inhale* *p*

Pf. *ppp*

Pp. *inhale* *ppp*

Perc. *tam* *p* *snare* *fff*

Vn. *shaker* *fp*

Va. *shaker* *fp*

Vc. *shaker* *fp*

Pp. *exhale* *fp* *p*

Cb.

[illegible]



[illegible]

4 7 8

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Pp.

Gt.

Pp.

Pf.

Pp.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Pp.

Cb.

*fp* *ppp* *pp* *fp* *mf* *fp* *fp* *pp* *f* *mf* *fp* *ppp* *p* *mf* *sfz* *ppp* *fp* *ppp* *mf* *ppp*

*inhale* *exhale* *L.V.* *exhale* *inhale*

7:6

[illegible]

[illegible]

68

44

[illegible]

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pp.

Pf.

Pp.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Pp.

Cb.

*fp*

*p*

*inhale*

*snare*

*fff*

*f*

*ppp*

Portland, OR  
January 2015 - April 2015

2014-05-15

*Scores available from the composer at*  
[www.josiahwolfoberholtzer.com](http://www.josiahwolfoberholtzer.com)

€80 / \$90