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Invisible Cities (iii):

# 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 an even, cloud-like texture.

*Invisible Cities (iii):*

# ERSILIA

*( a botanical survey of the uninhabited northeastern isles )*

*for Ensemble Dal Niente*

Josiah Wolf Oberholtzer (1984)

 = 96  
 Komokome

Flute

Oboe

Bass Clarinet

Baritone Saxophone

Pitch Pipes

Guitar

Pitch Pipes

Piano

Pitch Pipes

Percussion

Violin

Viola

Cello

Pitch Pipes

Contrabass

3

150

9

7/8 4/8

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

shaker

shaker

shaker

5:4

5:4

5:4

3:2

3:2

15

crotales

snare

ppp


f

mf

f

fp

fff

pizz. 



[illegible]

21

7  
8

4  
4

5  
8

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

Flz.

fz

fp

ppp

f

pizz.

7:6

blocks

toms

5:4

mf

f

fff

ppp

f

ff

Flz.

Ob.

Cl.

Sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

bass drum

shaker

pizz.

7:6

5:4

3:2

4:3

f

mf

p

pp

ppp

pppp

fpp

ffp

fff

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

shaker

ppp

7:6

ppp

shaker

ppp

shaker

ppp

5:4

fp

fp

fp

8va

3:2

p

pp

fp

mp

mf

p

ppp

pizz.

ppp

ppp

7:6

ppp

ppp

ppp

3:2

ppp

pizz.

ppp

4  
4

4  
8

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

*fp*

*f*

*mf*

*p*

*f*

*mp*

*ppp*

*3.2*

*7:6*

*crotales*

*shaker*

*5:4*

4/4

Fl. *ppp* *shaker* *ppp*

Ob. *shaker* *5:4* *ppp*

Bass cl.

Bar. sax. *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *fp*

Gt. *f* *sfz*

Pf. *f* *mf* *pp* *mp* *fp* *8va*

Perc. *snare* *fff*

Vn. *fp*

Va.

Vc.

Cb. *ppp*

37

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

shaker

snare

overpressure

pizz.

8va<sub>1</sub>

3:2

5:4

pp

ppp

mf

mp

p

f

ff

fff

fp

ffz

mfz

overpressure

pizz.

ppp





48

44

[illegible]

(47)

$\frac{5}{8}$

$\frac{4}{8}$

The musical score is for a full orchestra and includes parts for 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 three measures. The first measure is in 5/8 time, and the second and third measures are in 4/8 time.

The score features complex rhythms, including 7:6, 3:2, and 5:4 ratios. Dynamics range from *ppp* to *f*.

The percussion part includes shaker, toms, and blocks.

The string parts include various techniques like tremolos and slurs.

[illegible]



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 dynamics range from *ppp* (pianississimo) to *fff* (fortississimo). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and articulation marks. The instruments listed on the left include Fl. (Flute), Ob. (Oboe), Clar. (Clarinet), Sax. (Saxophone), Gt. (Guitar), Pf. (Piano), Perc. (Percussion), Vn. (Violin), Va. (Viola), Vc. (Cello), and Cb. (Double Bass). The score is a complex arrangement of musical parts, with each instrument contributing to the overall sound of the piece. The notation is clear and detailed, allowing for a precise performance of the music.

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

5:4

mf

7:6

p

5:4

p

fp

8va

ppp

mf

tam

pizz.

5:4

ppp

pizz.

ppp

pizz.

ppp

Fl. *shaker* *ppp* *fp*

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

Bass cl. *shaker* *ppp* *fp*

Bar. sax. *fp* *ppp*

Gt. *f* *sfz* *f* *f* *sfz*

Pf. *mp* *p* *mf* *f* *8va1* *fp* *pp* *f* *fff* *fff* *fff*

Perc. *snare* *fff* *fp* *fff*

Vn. *pizz.* *ppp* *5:4* *overpressure* *fff*

Va. *ppp* *overpressure* *fff*

Vc. *overpressure* *fff*

Cb. *ppp* *p*

65

4/4
5/8





Fl. *f*  $\frac{7:6}{}$  *mp*

Ob. *f* *p* Flz.

Bass cl. *f* *mf*

Bar. sax. *f* *mf* *f*  $\frac{15:14}{}$  *mf*

Gt. *f*  $\frac{9:8}{}$  *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

Pf. *f* *fff*

Perc. *p* *ppp*  $\frac{8:7}{}$  *f* *toms*

Vn. *f*  $\frac{7:6}{}$  *p*

Va. *p* *f*

Vc. *f* *p*

Cb. *p*  $\frac{7:6}{}$  *f*

7 8 B Sort

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Pp. *exhale*

Gt.

Pp. *inhale*

Pf.

Pp. *inhale*

Perc. *blocks*

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Pp. *exhale*

Cb.

*ppp*

*p*

*f*

*mf*

*ppp*

*fp*

*ppp*

*p*

*f*

*mf*

*ppp*

*fff*

*f*

*mf*

*f*

*mp*

*fp*

*mp*

*p*

*f*

*ppp*

*p*

*5:4*

*3:2*

*4:3*

*8va*

4/8 4/4

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Ve.

Cb.

ppp

5:4

f

ppp

fp

pp

5:4

8va

p

f

f

fp

fp

fp

pp

pp

blocks

3:2

marimba

f

mf

p

p

fp

s

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

musical score with staves and notation

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Pp.

Gt.

Pp.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Pp.

Cb.

The musical score is for measures 27-29 of 'Invisible Cities (iii): Ersilia'. The time signature is 4/8. The instruments are arranged in a standard orchestral layout. The woodwinds (Flute, Oboe, Bass Clarinet, Baritone Saxophone) have rests in measures 27 and 28, with the Baritone Saxophone playing a melodic line in measure 29. The strings (Violins, Violas, Cellos) have rests in measures 27 and 28, with the Violas playing a melodic line in measure 29. The piano (Pp.) has rests in measures 27 and 28, with the right hand playing a melodic line in measure 29. The guitar (Gt.) has rests in measures 27 and 28, with the right hand playing a melodic line in measure 29. The percussion (Perc.) has rests in measures 27 and 28, with the right hand playing a melodic line in measure 29. The cello (Cb.) has rests in measures 27 and 28, with the right hand playing a melodic line in measure 29. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and articulation marks. The dynamic markings are fp, f, mp, ppp, and f. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and articulation marks.

[illegible]

[illegible]

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 sharp (F#) 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 *p* (piano), *f* (forte), *mp* (mezzo-piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *ff* (fortissimo). There are also tempo markings, including "6:4" and "5:4", which likely refer to the film's timing. 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 a complex arrangement of musical parts, with each instrument contributing to the overall sound of the piece. The score is written in a clear and legible style, with a focus on the musical notation and the instruments it is written for.



Fl. *mf* *ppp* *ppp*

Ob. *mf* *ppp* *ppp*

Bass cl. *ppp* *ppp* *ppp* 3:2

Bar. sax. *f* *mf* *ppp* *fp*

Pp. *fp* *fp* inhale exhale

Gt. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *p* L.V. L.V.

Pf. *fp* *pp* *fp* *fp* *fp* *mp* *fp* *fp* 8va 8va 8va

Pp. *fp* inhale

Perc. *f* *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *f* marimba

Vn. *p* *fp* *p*

Va. *fp* *p*

Vc. *mp* *fp* *ff* *p* *fp* 3:2

Pp. *fp* *ppp* inhale

Cb. *p* *fp* 3:2

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

*ppp*

*ppp*

*mp*

*ppp*

*mf*

*p*

*p*

*f*

*fff*

*ppp*

*sfz*

*mp*

*p*

*sfz*

*pp*

*p*

*mp*

*mf*

*fp*

*p*

*p*

*f*

*mf*

*f*

*mf*

*f*

*fp*

*f*

*p*

*fp*

*fp*

*mf*

*fp*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*fp*

*p*

*fp*

*blocks*

*r 3:2*

*5:4*

*7:6*

*7:6*

*3:2*

*L.V.*

This musical score is for the piece "The Great Wall" by John Adams. It is written for a large ensemble, including Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Bass Clarinet (Bass cl.), Baritone Saxophone (Bar. sax.), Guitar (Gt.), Piano (Pf.), Percussion (Perc.), Violin (Vn.), Viola (Va.), Cello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Cb.). The score is divided into three measures, each with a specific time signature: 4/4, 5/8, and 3/4. The music features a variety of dynamics, including *mf* (mezzo-forte), *mp* (mezzo-piano), *ppp* (pianissimo), *f* (forte), and *fff* (fortissimo). The score includes complex rhythmic patterns, such as the 4:3 and 7:6 ratios in the Bar. sax. part, and the 3:2, 5:4, and 8:6 ratios in the Fl. part. The Perc. part includes a section labeled "windchimes" and another labeled "blocks". The Vn., Va., and Vc. parts feature a section labeled "overpressure". The Cb. part includes a section labeled "8va1". The score is written in a standard musical notation style, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat).

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Fl. *ppp* *ppp* 5:4 *ppp*

Ob. *ppp* *ppp*

Bass cl. *ppp* *ppp*

Bar. sax. *ppp* *ppp* *ppp* *fp*

Pp. *inhale* *fp*

Gt. *pp* *mf fz* *ppp fz*

Pp. *inhale* *fp* *ppp*

Pf. *fp* *p* *fp* *p* *f* 3:2 *fp*

Pp. *exhale* *fp* *ppp*

Perc. *windchimes* *pp* *pp*

Vn. *overpressure* *fff* *fff* *mp*

Va. *overpressure* *fff* *fff* *ppp*

Vc. *overpressure* *fff* *ppp* *fff* *overpressure*

Pp. *exhale* *fp*

Cb. *fp*

L.V

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Ve.

Cb.

7:6

mf

3:2

8:6

mp

mp

f

mf

f

mf

5:4

mf

L.V.

p

p

pp

pp

mf

f

mf

fp

p

5:4

f

fp

f

mf

fp

3:2

f

mf

f

blocks

marimba

3:2

3:2

f

p

overpressure

fff

overpressure

fff

overpressure

fff

fff

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

musical score with staves and instruments



Fl. *mp* *5:4*

Ob. *p* *3:2* *6:4* *f* *mf*

Bass cl. *f* *mf* *5:4* *ppp* *3:2*

Bar. sax. *mf* *ppp* *3:2*

Pp. *fp* *inhale* *exhale*

Gt. *p* *sfz* *pp* *mf* *sfz*

Pf. *mf* *f* *f* *3:2* *fp* *p* *fp*

Pp. *fp* *inhale* *exhale*

Perc. *ppp* *f* *marimba*

Vn. *fp*

Va. *fp*

Vc. *p* *fp* *fp*

Pp. *fp* *inhale* *inhale*

Cb. *fp*

[illegible]

[illegible]

Violin (Vn.)

Viola (Va.)

Violoncello (Vc.)

Contrabass (Cb.)

Dynamic markings: *fp*, *fff*, *mf*

Label: *overpressure*

Fl. *ppp*

Ob. *ppp* 7:6

Bass cl. *f* 5:4 *f* *mp*

Bar. sax. *f* 7:6 *mf* *f*

Gt. *f* 7:6 *mf* *f* *mf*

Pf. *p* 8va *f* *p* 5:4 *f* *mf*

Perc. *p* *ppp* 5:4 *f*

Vn. *f* *p*

Va. *p*

Vc. *f* 3:2 *p*

Cb. *ppp* *ppp*

toms

shaker

shaker

shaker

L.V

pizz.

4/8 7/8 7/8

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

bass drum

shaker

*f* *mf* *mp* *p*

[illegible]

148



48

[illegible]

4/8

4/4

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Pp.

Gt.

Pp.

Pf.

Pp.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Pp.

Cb.

shaker

inhale

inside

exhale

*p*

*fp*

*f*

*fff*

*snare*

5 4 4

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Ve.

Cb.

L.V.

L.V.

L.V.

L.V.

bass drum

ff

mf

ff

7:6

f

ff

p

ff

pp

5:4

mf

mf

5:4

mp

ff

mf

ppp

p

ppp

ppp

ff

ppp

ff

ppp

51

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[illegible]

54



8

4  
4

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Pp.

Gt.

Pp.

Pf.

Pp.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Pp.

Cb.

shaker

fp

fp

7:6

L.V

mf

mf

mf

snare

fff

fff

fff

[illegible]

4

8

3

8

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Pp.

Gt.

Pp.

Pf.

Pp.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Pp.

Cb.

shaker

fp

pp

p

f

fp

p

L.V

p

exhale

p

inhale

fp

snare

fff

f

shaker

fp

inhale

fp

ppp

3:2

4

3

8

2014-05-15

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

€80 / \$90