
Invisible Cities:
ERSILIA

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)

Flute
 Oboe
 Bass Clarinet
 Baritone Saxophone
 Pitch Pipes
 Guitar
 Piano
 Percussion
 Violin
 Viola
 Cello
 Pitch Pipes
 Contrabass

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

Fl. *fp* *shaker* *fp*

Ob. *fp* *shaker*

Bass cl. *shaker* *ppp* 7:6 *fp*

Bar. sax. *mf* *f* *f* 5:4 *mf*

Gt. *f* *fp*

Pf. *f* *fff* *8va* *f* 3:2 *f* 3:2 *pp* *8va* *mp* *8va* *mf* *mp* *fff*

Perc. *f*

Vn. *shaker* *ppp*

Va. *shaker* *ppp*

Vc. *shaker* *ppp* 5:4

Cb. *s* *ppp*

This musical score is for the piece "The Great Wall" by John Williams, from the soundtrack of the 1987 film "The Last of the Mohicans". The score is written for piano and percussion.

Instrumentation:

- Piano:** The piano part is written in treble and bass staves. It features a 6:5 ratio marking, indicating a specific tuning or interval. The piano part includes various dynamics such as *ppp* (pianississimo), *p* (piano), *fp* (fortissimo), and *f* (forte).
- Percussion:** The percussion part includes staves for blocks, toms, snare, and pizz. (pizzicato). The blocks and toms are marked with *p* and *f*. The snare is marked with *fff* (fortississimo). The pizz. part is marked with *ppp*.

Key Features:

- 6:5 Ratio:** A marking indicating a specific tuning or interval, likely a 6:5 ratio, which is a common interval in Western music.
- Dynamic Markings:** The score uses a wide range of dynamic markings to create a sense of volume and intensity, from *ppp* to *fff*.
- Instrumentation:** The score is written for piano and percussion, with the piano part in treble and bass staves and the percussion part in separate staves.

[illegible]

4/8

7/8

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

shaker

ppp

shaker

5:4

ppp

shaker

ppp

shaker

fp

shaker

fp

f

mf

f

fp

f

mf

f

sfz

f

5:4

f

3:2

f

fff

fff

fff

crotales

f

snare

fff

[illegible]

[illegible]

1507

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 treble and bass clefs used for different instruments. The score is divided into measures, with some measures containing multiple staves for different instruments. The tempo and mood are indicated by the title and the style of the music. The score is a complex arrangement of musical elements, including melody, harmony, and rhythm. The instruments listed in the score are 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 detailed and professional musical composition.

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

ppp

pp

p

mf

f

fp

7:6

crotales

shaker

pizz.

3:2

5:4

4/4

3

ppp

shaker

ppp

fp

shaker

5:4

ppp

7:6

f

mf

f

mf

fp

fp

f

mf

pp

8va

3:2

pp

mp

fp

ppp

mf

fff

snare

fff

fff

ppp

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 4/4 time and features a variety of musical notations, including dynamics (e.g., *fp*, *mf*, *ppp*, *f*, *fff*, *mp*, *p*, *mf*), articulation (e.g., *shaker*, *snare*, *overpressure*, *pizz.*), and performance instructions (e.g., *8va*, *5:4*, *7:6*, *3:2*). The score is divided into measures, with some measures containing multiple staves for different instruments. The overall style is characteristic of John Williams' film score compositions, with a focus on dramatic and emotional expression.

48

[illegible]

48

44

[illegible]

78

5

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

p

ppp

shaker

3:2

7:6

fp

8va₁

fp

mf

mp

p

mf

pizz.

5:4

ppp

ppp

ppp

ppp

ppp

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

fp

ppp

f

sfz

fff

pp

f

snare

overpressure

p

3:2

8va

[illegible]

Invisible Cities (iii): Ersilia

Fl.

Musical staff for Flute (Fl.). It begins with a melodic line in the first measure, marked with a forte (f) dynamic and a 7:6 ratio. The line continues in the second measure, marked with a mezzo-piano (mp) dynamic. The staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Ob.

Musical staff for Oboe (Ob.). It begins with a melodic line in the first measure, marked with a forte (f) dynamic. The line continues in the second measure, marked with a piano (p) dynamic. The staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Bass cl.

Musical staff for Bass Clarinet (Bass cl.). It begins with a melodic line in the first measure, marked with a forte (f) dynamic. The line continues in the second measure, marked with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Bar. sax.

Musical staff for Baritone Saxophone (Bar. sax.). It begins with a melodic line in the first measure, marked with a forte (f) dynamic. The line continues in the second measure, marked with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Gt.

Musical staff for Guitar (Gt.). It begins with a melodic line in the first measure, marked with a forte (f) dynamic and a 9:8 ratio. The line continues in the second measure, marked with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Pf.

Musical staff for Piano (Pf.). It begins with a melodic line in the first measure, marked with a forte (f) dynamic. The line continues in the second measure, marked with a forte (f) dynamic. The staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Perc.

Musical staff for Percussion (Perc.). It begins with a melodic line in the first measure, marked with a piano (p) dynamic. The line continues in the second measure, marked with a mezzo-piano (ppp) dynamic. The staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Vn.

Musical staff for Violin (Vn.). It begins with a melodic line in the first measure, marked with a forte (f) dynamic and a 7:6 ratio. The line continues in the second measure, marked with a piano (p) dynamic. The staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Va.

Musical staff for Viola (Va.). It begins with a melodic line in the first measure, marked with a piano (p) dynamic. The line continues in the second measure, marked with a forte (f) dynamic. The staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Vc.

Musical staff for Violoncello (Vc.). It begins with a melodic line in the first measure, marked with a forte (f) dynamic. The line continues in the second measure, marked with a piano (p) dynamic. The staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Cb.

Musical staff for Contrabass (Cb.). It begins with a melodic line in the first measure, marked with a piano (p) dynamic and a 7:6 ratio. The line continues in the second measure, marked with a forte (f) dynamic. The staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

[illegible]

[illegible]

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

16

150

The musical score for "The Great Wall" by John Williams is presented in two systems. The first system includes the woodwind section (Flute, Oboe, Bass Clarinet, Baritone Saxophone) and the string section (Guitar, Piano, Percussion). The second system includes the string section (Violin, Viola, Violoncello, Contrabass). The music is in 2/4 time and features complex rhythmic patterns, including quintuplets and sextuplets, and dynamic markings such as ppp, p, pp, mp, p, fz, and ff.

[illegible]

[illegible]

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

ppp

ppp

ppp

ppp

mp

ppp

mf

p

f

fff

ppp

mp

p

sfz

pp

mf

3:2

mf

fp

p

sfz

pp

LV

p

mf

mf

3:2

fp

f

fp

f

mf

5:4

f

mf

7:6

f

mf

blocks

3:2

fp

f

p

fp

mf

p

p

p

fp

[illegible]

The image displays a page from a musical score, likely for a large orchestra and chamber ensemble. The score is organized into two systems of staves.

First System:

- Fl. (Flute):** Features a melodic line with a 5:4 ratio marking and dynamic markings *ppp* and *ppp*.
- Ob. (Oboe):** Features a melodic line with a 5:4 ratio marking and dynamic markings *ppp* and *ppp*.
- Bass cl. (Bass Clarinet):** Features a melodic line with a 5:4 ratio marking and dynamic markings *ppp* and *ppp*.
- Bar. sax. (Baritone Saxophone):** Features a melodic line with a 5:4 ratio marking and dynamic markings *ppp*, *ppp*, *fp*, and *ppp*.
- Pp. (Percussion):** Features a melodic line with a 5:4 ratio marking and dynamic markings *ppp* and *ppp*.
- Perc. (Percussion):** Features a melodic line with a 5:4 ratio marking and dynamic markings *pp* and *pp*.

Second System:

- Vn. (Violin):** Features a melodic line with dynamic markings *fff*, *mp*, and *fff*. Includes a performance instruction "overpressure".
- Va. (Viola):** Features a melodic line with dynamic markings *fff*, *ppp*, and *fff*. Includes a performance instruction "overpressure".
- Vc. (Violoncello):** Features a melodic line with dynamic markings *ppp*, *fff*, and *fff*. Includes a performance instruction "overpressure".
- Pp. (Percussion):** Features a melodic line with a 5:4 ratio marking and dynamic markings *ppp* and *ppp*.
- Cb. (Contrabass):** Features a melodic line with a 5:4 ratio marking and dynamic markings *ppp* and *ppp*.

The score includes various musical notations, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as *ppp*, *pp*, *mf*, *f*, and *fff*. There are also performance instructions like "overpressure" and "8va1".

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 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, 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 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".

Fl. *mf* 7:6

Ob. *mp* 8:6

Bass cl. *mp*

Bar. sax. *mf* 5:4 *f* 3:2 *mf* *ppp* 5:4 *f* *mf* *fp* *f*

Gt. *pp* *mf* *ppp sfz* *mp* *p sfz* *pp* *ppp* L.V.

Pf. *fp* *mf* *fp* 8va₁ *f* *mf* *fp* *mp* 5:4 *f* *mf* *f*

Perc. *f* *p* 3:2 *pp* windchimes *f* *fp* 3:2 *f* 5:4 *f* marimba *f* *p* 3:2 *pp* blocks

Vn. 6:5 *p* *fp*

Va. *fp* *fff* *mf* *mp* overpressure

Vc. *fff* *fp* *fff* *p* overpressure

Cb. *mf* x (**) *mf*

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

48

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

- Fl. (Flute):** Features complex rhythmic patterns with 6:4 and 5:4 time signatures, marked *mp* and *p*.
- Ob. (Oboe):** Features complex rhythmic patterns with 6:4 and 5:4 time signatures, marked *mf* and *mp*.
- Bass cl. (Bass Clarinet):** Features complex rhythmic patterns with 6:4 and 5:4 time signatures, marked *mf* and *mp*.
- Bar. sax. (Baritone Saxophone):** Features complex rhythmic patterns with 6:4 and 5:4 time signatures, marked *f* and *mf*.
- Gt. (Guitar):** Features complex rhythmic patterns with 6:4 and 5:4 time signatures, marked *pp*, *mf*, and *ppp*.
- Pf. (Piano):** Features complex rhythmic patterns with 6:4 and 5:4 time signatures, marked *f* and *fp*.
- Perc. (Percussion):** Features complex rhythmic patterns with 6:4 and 5:4 time signatures, marked *pp* and *f*.
- Vn. (Violin):** Features complex rhythmic patterns with 6:4 and 5:4 time signatures, marked *fp*, *fff*, and *mf*.
- Va. (Viola):** Features complex rhythmic patterns with 6:4 and 5:4 time signatures, marked *fp*, *fff*, and *mf*.
- Vc. (Violoncello):** Features complex rhythmic patterns with 6:4 and 5:4 time signatures, marked *fp*, *fff*, and *mf*.
- Cb. (Contrabass):** Features complex rhythmic patterns with 6:4 and 5:4 time signatures, marked *fp*, *fff*, and *mf*.

The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. It also includes a section for "windchimes" and "crotales" (crotales) in the Percussion part.

♩ = 64
4/8 [C] [ii]

Fl. *ppp*

Ob. *ppp* 7:6

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

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

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

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

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

Vn. *f* *p*

Va. *p*

Vc. *f* 3:2 *p*

Cb. *pizz.* *ppp* *ppp*

shaker *fp*

L.V. *fff*

♩ = 80
5/8 [D] Chemish

48
78
58
48

44

1505

This musical score is for the song "The Sound of Silence" by Simon & Garfunkel. It is written for a piano, drums, and shaker. The score is in 4/4 time and features a key signature of one sharp (F#). The piano part is written in treble clef, while the drums and shaker parts are written in bass clef. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings (p, mf, f, ppp). It also includes performance instructions like "inhale" and "shaker". The score is divided into three systems, each containing three staves. The first system shows the piano and drums. The second system shows the piano, drums, and shaker. The third system shows the piano, drums, and shaker. The score is a full arrangement of the song, including the introduction, verses, and chorus.

[illegible]

7/8 8/8 4/8

Fl. *shaker* *fp*

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

Bass cl. *shaker* *fp*

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

Pp. *inhale* *fp*

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

Pp. *inhale* *p*

Pf. *ppp* *inside* *p*

Pp. *inhale* *ppp*

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

Vn. *shaker* *fp*

Va. *shaker* *fp*

Vc. *shaker* *fp*

Pp. *exhale* *fp* *p*

Cb.

4/4

3/8

4/8

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

fp

mf

pp

p

f

ppp

inside

bass drum

L.V.

5:4

4/4

4/8

4/4

Fl.

Ob.

Bass cl.

Bar. sax.

Gt.

Pf.

Perc.

Vn.

Va.

Vc.

Cb.

7:6

5:4

fp

f

mf

p

ppp

sfz

shaker

tam

L.V.

48

[illegible]

The musical score for "The Great Wall" by John Williams is presented in two systems. The first system is marked with a 4/4 time signature, and the second system is marked with a 5/8 time signature. The score includes parts for a full orchestra and percussion.

First System (4/4 time signature):

- Flute (Fl.):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, and a half note A4.
- Oboe (Ob.):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, and a half note A4.
- Bass Clarinet (Bass cl.):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, and a half note A4.
- Baritone Saxophone (Bar. sax.):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, and a half note A4.
- Percussion (Pp.):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, and a half note A4.
- Guitar (Gt.):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, and a half note A4.
- Percussion (Pp.):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, and a half note A4.
- Piano (Pf.):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, and a half note A4.
- Percussion (Pp.):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, and a half note A4.
- Percussion (Perc.):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, and a half note A4.
- Violins (Vn, Va, Vc):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, and a half note A4.

Second System (5/8 time signature):

- Percussion (Pp.):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, and a half note A4.
- Contra Bass (Cb.):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, and a half note A4.
- Violins (Vn, Va, Vc):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, and a half note A4.

The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, dynamics (fp, f, p, mp, mf, sfz, ppp), articulation (accents, slurs), and performance instructions (exhale, inhale, inside, tam).

6
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

snare

fff

fff

This page of a musical score is divided into two systems. The first system includes staves for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Bass Clarinet (Bass cl.), Baritone Saxophone (Bar. sax.), Percussion (Perc.), and a group of strings (Pp., Gt., Pp., Pf., Pp., Perc.). The second system includes staves for Violin (Vn.), Viola (Va.), Violoncello (Vc.), Percussion (Pp.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The score is written in 3/8, 4/8, and 4/4 time signatures. It features various dynamic markings such as *pp*, *fp*, *p*, and *f*. Performance instructions like "shaker", "inhale", and "exhale" are placed above specific notes. The Percussion part includes a "bass drum" section. The string parts include a "LV" (Lento) marking. The score is written in a standard musical notation style with treble and bass clefs, and various accidentals and articulation marks.

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

€80 / \$90