# solace of articulation

solo clarinet d'amore and eight virtuoso players

Chris Dench

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(2022-3)

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for Richard Haynes

8

Ensemble Manufaktur für Aktuelle Musik

"...In any case, writing it has filled an hour and brought the solace of articulation..."

—Reprobates, by John Stubbs, p19

flute (with B foot)/piccolo

Solo: clarinet d'amore

bassoon

soprano trombone + mutes: straight & plunger
percussion: vibraphone, glockenspiel, and untuned set-up
piano/melodica
violin
viola
cello

duration: ~30': I—14'; II (p. 48)—9'; cadenza (p. 86)—2'; III (p. 89)—5'

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### Program note:

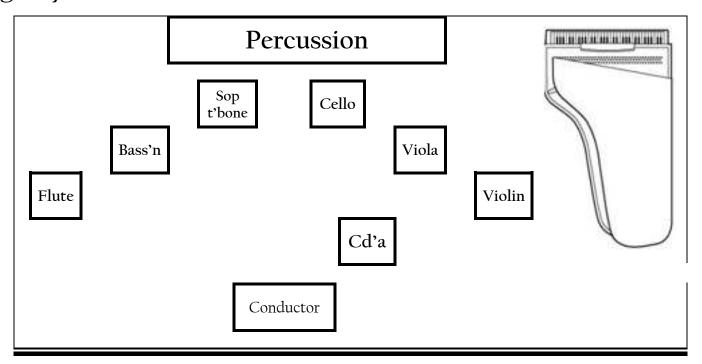
Early on in his book *Reprobates*, John Stubbs writes of a letter that it "is looking for a favour, though even [the author] himself is unsure what form that boon might take. In any case, writing it has filled an hour and brought the solace of articulation; it is sealed and dispatched" (p.19). For my purposes it doesn't matter who the author is; suffice to say that he is writing 410 years ago this fortnight; he is a gentleman, a Master of Chancery, who has just been swindled out of almost his entire estate. One of his sons is expensively invalid, another is a hunt-following blockhead, and the third is an indiscreet, spendthrift, narcissist who has just been sacked by the letter's intended recipient. As Stubbs indicates, the author is in despair—the writing of the letter is at least partly therapeutic.

The details and circumstances of the letter are unimportant for this work; it is the notion of *forming thoughts into argument as catharsis* that is the basic premise of **solace of articulation**. This experience is doubtless a commonplace, but that does not make it any less consequential for each writer. As with all such processes, digressions and contradictions, hesitations and festinations, and even irrelevancies are part of the pattern.

The clarinet d'amore is, in **solace of articulation**, the 'author'—the *prima materia* is sloughed-off by the soloist, and the other players then shape it into lines more suited to their instrument. This process does not always happen sequentially; as in all my pieces, time does not operate entirely linearly. The piece falls into three arches, which shorten in the approximate ratio 3:2:1; they could be loosely characterised as *impressionist*, *analytic*, and *chiasmic*; within this general shape, there is a fair amount of unpredictability. In lieu of a major cadenza there is an extended 'exegetical' duet for clarinet d'amore and soprano trombone—which may be the very first-ever of its kind—between the *analytic* and *chiasmic* sections.

The work was written between October 2022 and May 2023 at the request of Richard Haynes, for himself to perform with Ensemble Manufaktur für Aktuelle Musik.

# Suggested stage layout:



#### Performance notes:

- This work was written as a chamber concerto for Richard Haynes and his newly-developed modern clarinet d'amore, which transposes in *G*, down a fourth. The soloist's performance part is accordingly notated in *G*; the solo part in the score, however, is at pitch.
  - Richard Haynes and Ensemble Manufaktur für Aktuelle Musik have exclusivity to performances of this work for a period of three years from the date of first performance. As clarinet d'amore is a rare instrument, once this exclusivity period is over performances of the work on either a basset horn in F, or a basset clarinet in A, are also authorised. There will be separate, slightly adjusted, solo parts for these two alternative featured instruments. These *ossias* are *not* shown in the score. Nothing else in the score changes in these alternative versions.
- 2 Accidentals only apply to the notes they immediately precede, excepting strings of repeated notes which continue until a new pitch is introduced.
  - Clarinet d'amore makes use of an unusual clef: the treble clef with a small 8 beneath, meaning an octave lower; it continues until cancelled by a treble clef, with the word Loco adjoining. This clef is a convenience for score use only; the part is transposed and notated as normal. No other 8vas are used in the clarinet part. Very occasionally the solo part utilises a bass clef (at pitch)—in the score only, the part is notated as usual.

**Piano/percussion**: note that a treble clef with a small  $\boldsymbol{8}$  at the top, and a bass clef with a small  $\boldsymbol{8}$  beneath mean that the entire stave is one octave above/below notated pitch. These continue until cancelled by a normal treble or bass clef, with the word Loco adjoining.

In this score tremolo signs ≠ mean *fluttertongue*, or string tremolando, or drum roll, or flute harmonic trill, usually as fast as possible irrespective of the number of slashes—the few exceptions are clearly indicated. Rapidly repeated notes are written out in full.

3 The score is notated at a nominal 3 cm = 1 second. In some sections the on-page beats have been shortened to allow of better pagination. In these instances (which are not indicated) the proportions within beats remain uniform.

NB: metronomic tempi given in the score are abstract reflections of the architecture, and consequently *suggestions*. Take all sections at speeds that seem idiomatic rather than slavishly follow the metronome—effect is more important than exactitude—with interpretative tempo choices and a judicious hint of *rubato*.

In this score

Rall(entando) means gradually get slower

Rit(enuto) means a sudden holding back of tempo

Both only persist as long as the brace indicates.

**4 Dynamics**—there are nine degrees of dynamic in this piece:

$$pppp-ppp-pp-p-mf-f-fff-ffff-ffff$$

Dynamics should be not be treated as a simple linear soft $\rightarrow$ loud: they function as variations in the *local* context. Note that there is no *mp* dynamic: mf is midway between p and f. The extreme dynamics are rarely used and should be considered primarily rhetorical, as 'stage-whisper' and 'cry out' respectively. *Sforzati* increase in loudness: mfz-fz-sfz, etc.

- 5 Emphases are used to indicate either slight stresses or a hint of *detaché*; context will be the guide. Hard attacks > are used to indicate pitches that need to be brought out—context will govern the extent to which these pitches need to be *martellato*. Bracketed hard attacks (>) simply flag that the prevailing dynamic in which the attack occurs is quiet, and the attack is to be more a matter of tone-colour than volume.
- Prosodic indications: the indications above the beam have to do with metric stress—they are mostly found in the percussion.

  The emphasis mark doubles as indicating a strong stress, and indicates a weak; they can appear in either order. The dynamics should underline these patterns.
- 7 A double-slash // indicates that a parameter abruptly changes, from vibrato to no vibrato, or *sul tasto* to *ordinario*, for example.

An arrow  $\rightarrow$  means that a parameter changes gradually, from whatever is prevailing at the beginning to whatever is indicated at the end of the arrow.

8 There are two degrees of fermata in this piece. Neither is of a specific duration, and should be established in rehearsal. Size is a guide, a small triangle is shorter than a large, but both are shorter than a square:



indicating a brief suspension of activity;



meaning a longer pause.

Of Clarinet d'amore solo: there are several dyadic multiphonics in this piece. These are numbered in the score from upwards:

[1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6] [7] [8]

Note that the pitches provided in the score for these dyads are rough approximations.

At various points in the piece, but particularly in the closing sections of II and III, the clarinetist d'amore is required to raise their bell high, jazz-style. This is indicated by  $\boxed{U}$  (for "up") preceded by and followed by an arrow. The player should raise the bell gradually during the music under the first arrow, and lower to normal playing position, marked as  $\boxed{D}$  (for "down") during the music under the second arrow. In the absence of an arrow, normal playing position is indicated by ORD. For clarity these indications are in *hexagonal* boxes.  $\boxed{1/2}$ U simply means to raise the bell part way.

Woodwinds: multiphonics are indicated by a boxed letter  $\overline{\mathbb{M}}$  above the stave. Where indicated, these should emerge from the previous pitch. No secondary pitches have been suggested—specific, and preferably stable, multiphonics are better decided on in rehearsal. The primary (notated) pitch should where possible be present in the soundblock, but the continuity of sound-envelope takes precedence—choose them primarily for fingering-contiguity. Where the boxed  $\overline{\mathbb{M}}$  has a number after it— $\overline{\mathbb{M}}$  and so on—this indicates that these are different multiphonics derived from the same fingering.

Circled numbers above pitches indicate alternative fingerings. These should go from ① closest to normal fingering/timbre, to ④ furthest from normal fingering /timbre. In general, odd-numbered fingerings should be slightly raised pitch, and even slightly lowered pitch.

The sign **v** at the front of a notehead indicates that there should be a slight drop of pitch immediately before the new attack. For trombone a slight shift of the slide, for woodwind a slight down-bend of the pitch. This gesture almost always occurs in the middle of pulsed or repeated notes.

- 1] Flute: a B foot is necessary. If one is absolutely not available consult the composer for ossias.
- 12 Soprano trombone: I have written for this instrument conservatively, but on the basis that it *does* have an F valve. On the rare occasions that the valve is required *ossias* are provided for valveless instruments. Some high-note *ossias* have also been provided.
- 13 Piano: In this piece a continuing line with the 3 symbol means sustained by middle pedal for the indicated duration.

# 14 Untuned percussion:

[see note 17 below]	Tamtam (medium/large) TAM	Chime bar (in A 440)	Kick bass drum KBD	Metal/wood rod (long) ROD	Slide flute (unpitched) SF	Shot glass SG
Triangle TRI	Crotale bell— small, untuned CB	Piccolo snare drum (snares on throughout) PSD	Snare drum SD	Tomtom (large) TOM	Rototom (single) ROTO	Tin can 15-20cm TIN CAN
Claves— one laid flat CL	Ratchet— mounted RAT	Slapstick/whip (mounted clapper) WHIP	Maraccas— mounted MAR	Guero— mounted GUE	Anvil— mounted ANV	Ceramic tile (medium-small) CT
Wood block— mounted (large) WB	Temple block— mounted (medium) TB	Cowbell— mounted (medium) COW	Cymbal (large) СҮМ	Sizzle cymbal (medium/large) SCYM	Kitchen bowl (medium: ceramic) KBC	Kitchen bowl (large: stainless steel) KBSS

Sticks: VERY HARD: VH - SOFT: S - wire brushes WBR - plastic/bamboo chopsticks (or knitting needles, etc) - metal sticks (screw, etc)

the player is free to make substitutions and adaptations while retaining the character of the sounds

chime bar

CL

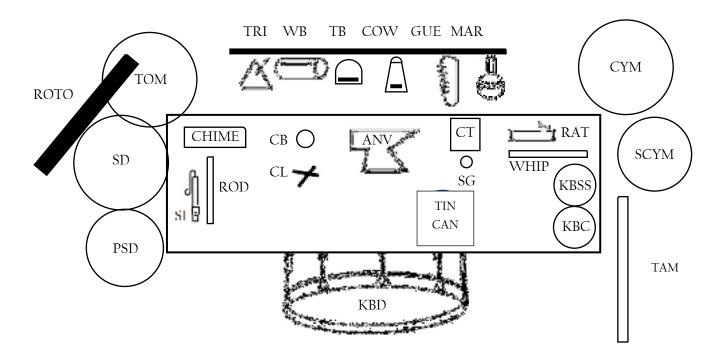
# 15 Score layout:

# TRI/CB PSD SD MAR GUE TIN CAN TRI WHIP ANV TB

COW KBC

KBSS \_\_\_\_ KBD

# 16 Percussion layout suggestion:



#### 17 Percussion details:

All the percussion instruments used in this piece appear singly: *one* woodblock, *one* cowbell, etc. As they have to match the clarinet d'amore, they should be midrange to large in size, and chosen to be consonant with the clarinet sound.

Sticking indications are somewhat idealised and function as *suggestions*—it is understood that concessions will inevitably be made. Many of the rapid changes can be achieved by having two sticks in each hand, one soft, one hard, or a chopstick, etc. Only a couple of hardnesses are actually suggested: VH and VS; otherwise the player should select appropriate sticks inbetween those two extremes. Similarly, the ROD and chopstick designations could also be achieved by instead using the grip end of normal sticks: their slight whippiness being a sonic benefit. The player is invited to solve the sticking as they best choose, and use whatever seems serviceable. Chime bar: only one is required, in A-440.

- Cymbal should be noticeably larger than sizzle cymbal—the abbreviations D and R mean dome and rim respectively.
- Tamtam should be as big as can be reasonably sourced.

For sizzle cymbal, cymbal, and tamtam note that M = midface—when not indicated D, R, or M, strike as normal (between midface and rim). The arrow from one to the other means a movement across the face of the cymbal/tamtam either as a single stroke (a sweep) or as progressive repeated notes. Edge, E, means striking the thin side of the cymbal/tamtam rather than the face. BOW indicates bowing the edge of the cymbal/tamtam for the notated duration: standard bowing marks apply ( $^{\mathsf{v}}$  upbow;  $^{\mathsf{m}}$  down-bow). Use the same contrabass BOW as for vibraphone.

- Cymbal, tamtam, and sizzle cymbal are each played (once) with a *screw*. This should be a standard metal builders' screw, longish: about 10cms. Drag it downwards across the rim of the cymbal/tamtam to make a guero-like sound—the notated rhythm gives the speed. Allow to ring. Do not be too aggressive!
- Sizzle cymbal, cymbal, tamtam, triangle, and all other sustained sounds should always be allowed to ring on.
- Crotale bell: some kind of antique/finger cymbal or other similar small bell of non-specific pitch. The triangle may be used instead, if necessary.
- For the *coperto* sections, a heavy cloth is put on the skin of the **tomtom**—this should be at least upholstery-weight material. If wished, a larger bass drum could substitute for the **tomtom** where the *coperto* use is called for. Or the front skin of the kick bass drum could be struck.
- The claves will need to be firmly fixed in place; an alternative resonant dry wood sound is acceptable if this proves problematic (but *not* another woodblock).
- The anvil can be any solid but resonant largeish piece of metal, but the effect should be fairly dry.
- The ratchet is required to make controlled repeated clacking sounds—any such device will do, but if nothing satisfactory can be found a second, higher-pitched woodblock can be substituted.
- The whip/slapstick should be a clapper that can be played flat.
- Rod can be either metal or wood (cooking skewers, say, which can also be used as sticks), and is tapped from the grip end upwards [↑] and downwards [↓] against a solid surface, such as the table-edge (or anvil, etc). The effect should be of a rising and falling impact—the sound should be predominantly that of the rod, not the table/anvil. A louder version of the same effect is also achieved by similarly tapping a side drum stick against the edge of the table.
- A largish tin can is required, perhaps 15-20 cm diameter, with or without lid, as preferred. It should be held upsidedown by the player, and the bottom struck with a moderate-sized coin. The strike points are indicated as content, midpoint, and edge; → indicates a transition between these strike points. Try to choose a tin that has quite varied tone-colours across it's strike zone. If all else fails a smaller tin may be used.
- The slide flute only appears briefly but for the duration of that entry it coopts the entire upper percussion system. A bigger one, is preferable, if possible. In this entry the top line of the stave is the upper boundary and the bottom line the lower. Try to emulate the pitch line as notated.
- Similarly, the single entry of the **rototom** coopts the entire stave, and the top line of the stave is the upper boundary and the bottom line the lower. Try to emulate the pitch line as notated.
- My thanks to Alex Meagher for road-testing this set-up, and Graham Leak for the excellent ideas.

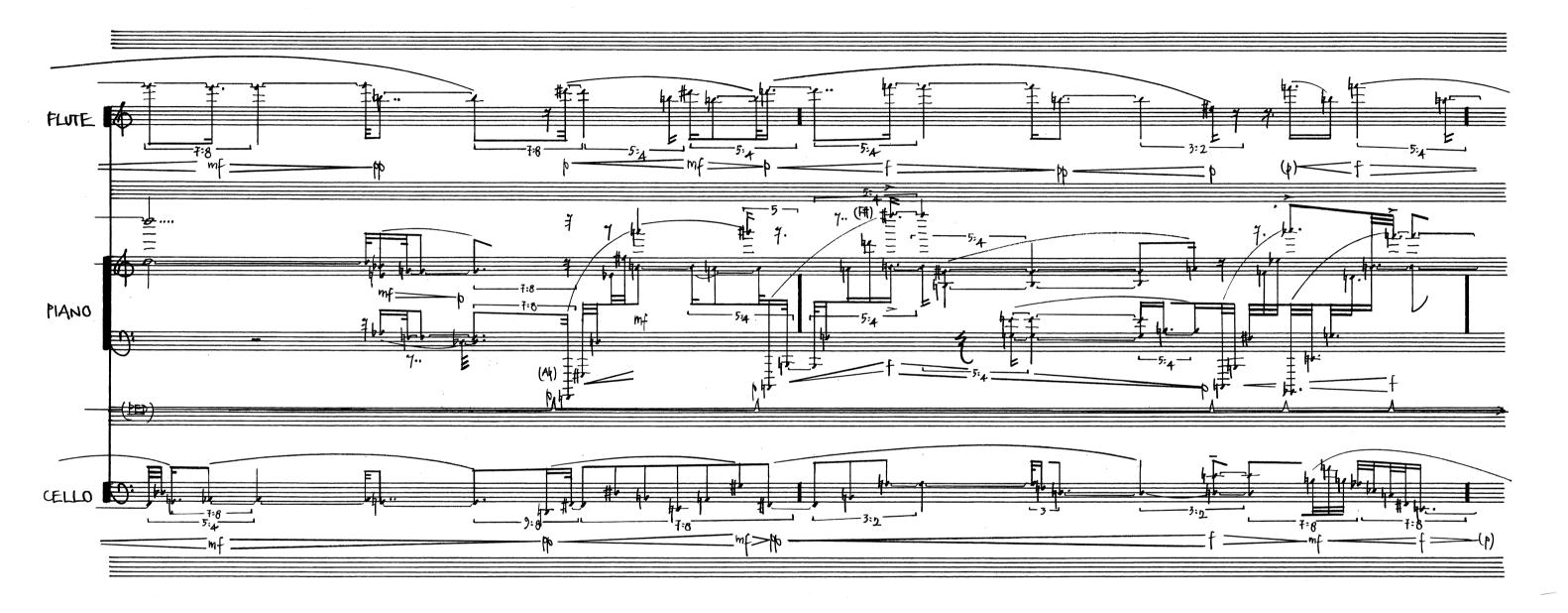
#### 18 Tuned percussion instruments used are:

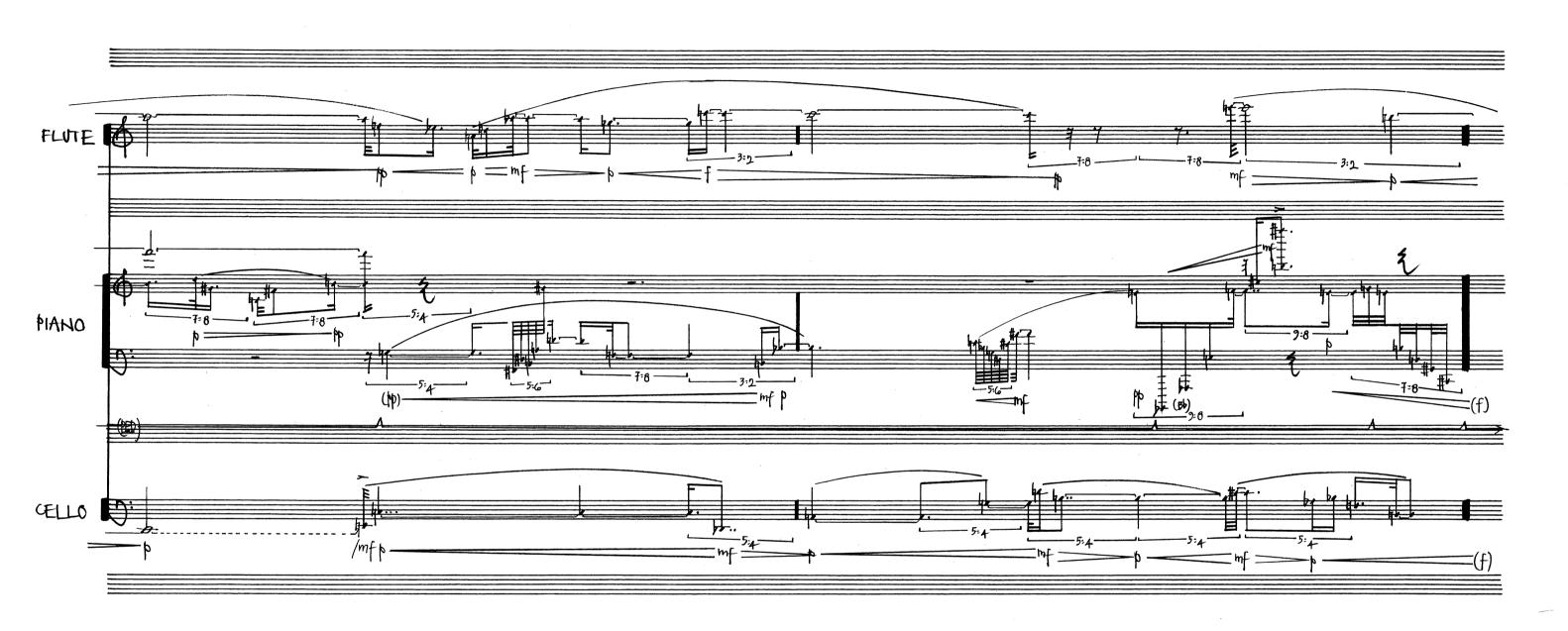
Vibraphone: also utilising a contrabass BOW. The notated duration indicates the bowing duration, but the pedal line shows how long the sound should continue. There is also a request during G4 and G5 that a sandbag be placed on the sustain bar to allow for independent ring-on—any method of achieving the same outcome is acceptable.

Glockenspiel: positioned to the right hand side of the vibraphone, either slightly above and behind the vibes, or at right angles to it, parallel to the bars—the part is uncomplicated.

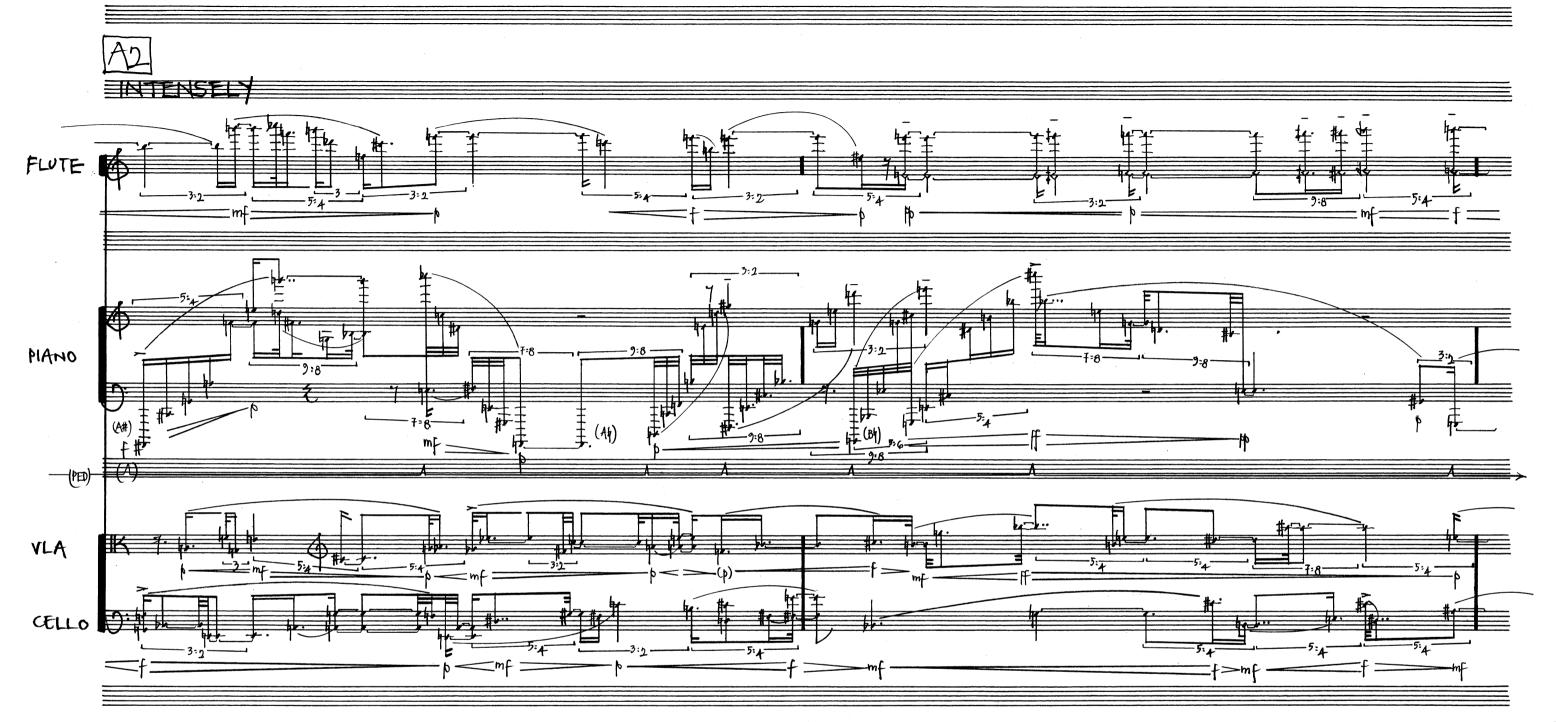
Melodica is performed by the pianist—the part is fairly simple—and is notated within the piano line; piano and melodica are never used together. It should have a range including F3 to C6, such as the Hohner Student 32, and need not be particularly good quality. It should have a long air-tube attached to the mouthpiece so the player does not have to hold the instrument

- up—the material is designed to be played with both hands. It is used here for its *colour*—other electronic keyboards may be substituted, but preferably with a volume control to emulate the melodica's breath envelope. It is probably best placed on a table at the pianist's right hand side.
- 20 Strings: a string of microtonal pitches under a slur with an asterisk (\*) should be played with a single finger, with short portamenti, and under a single bow-stroke.

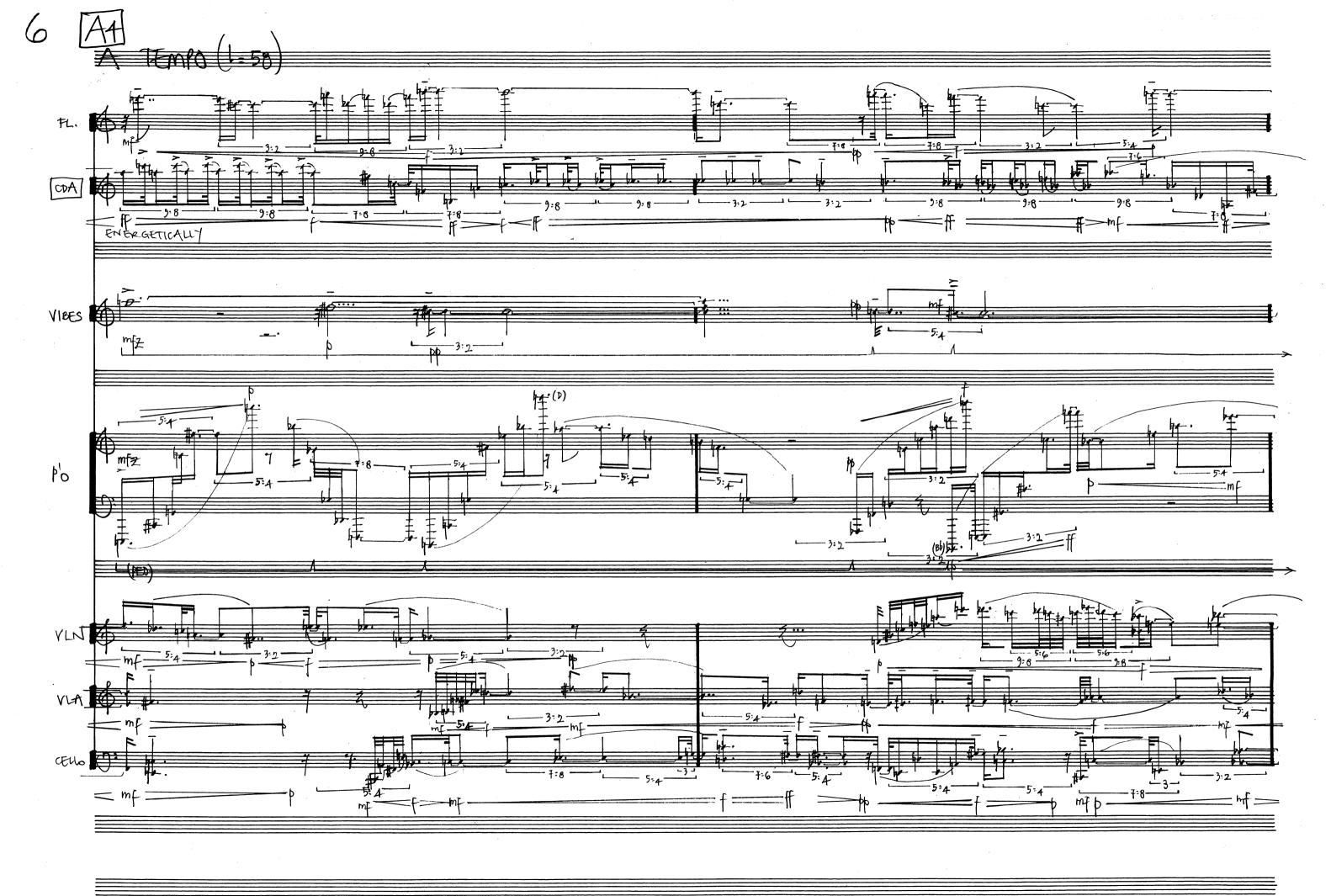


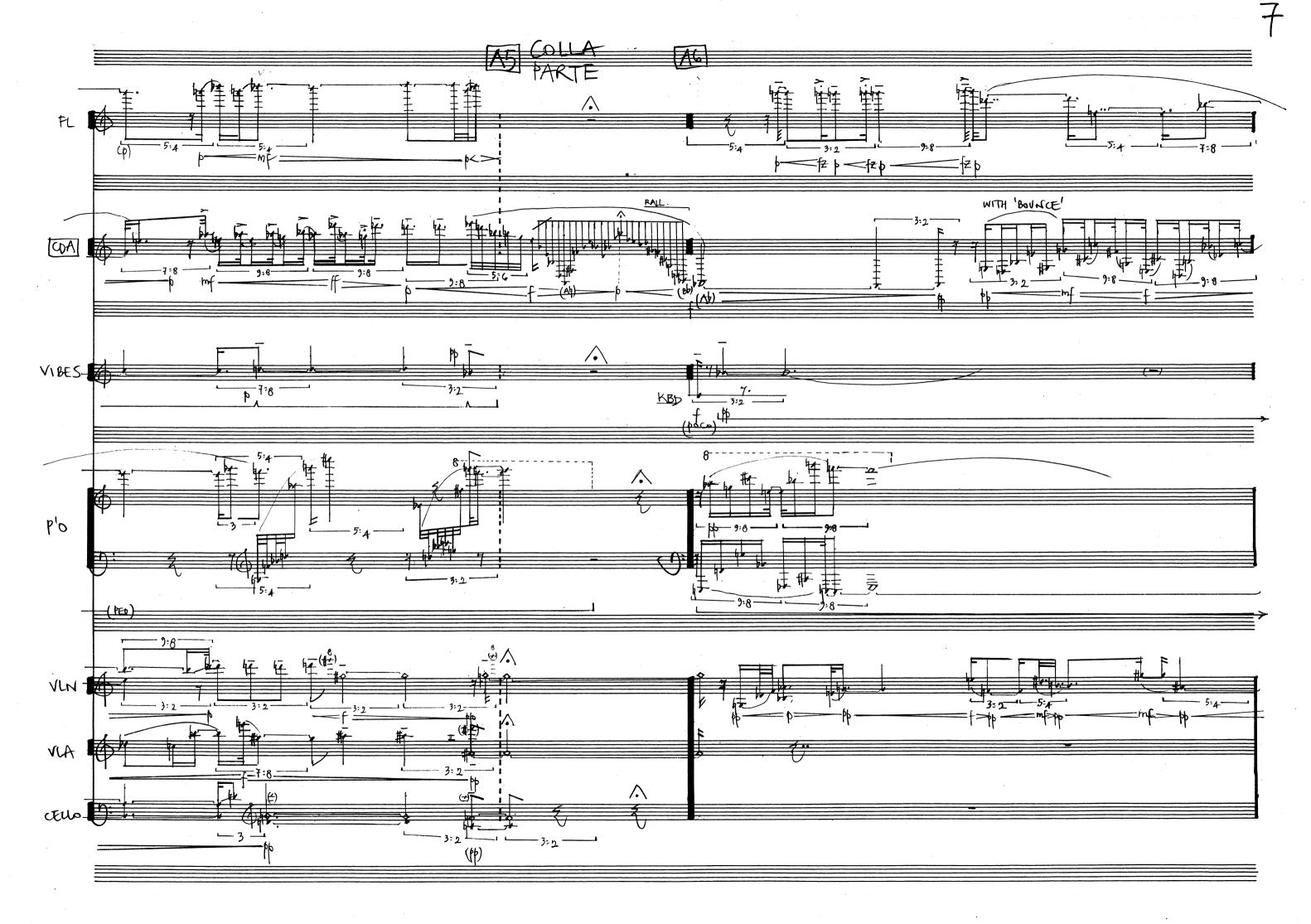








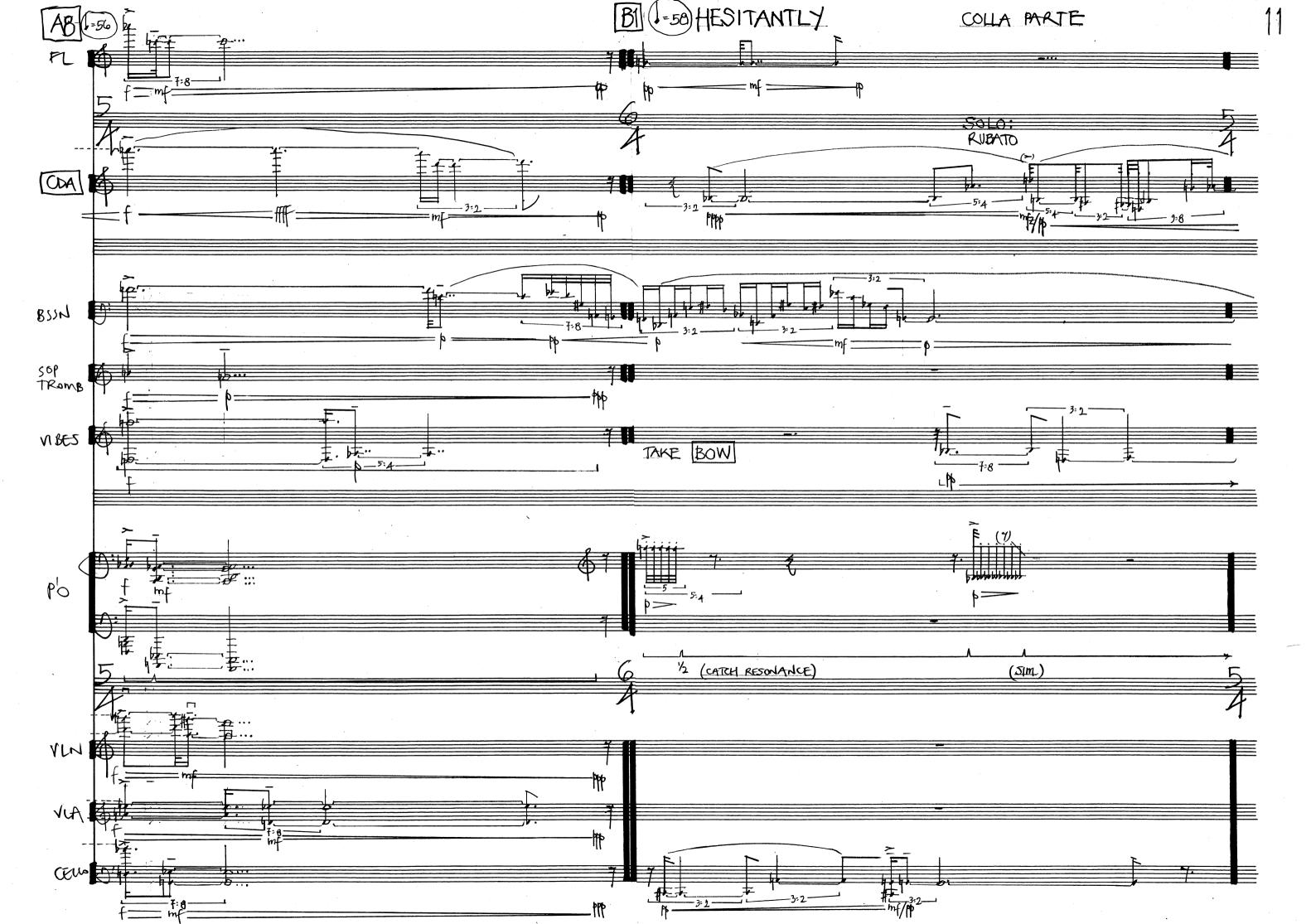




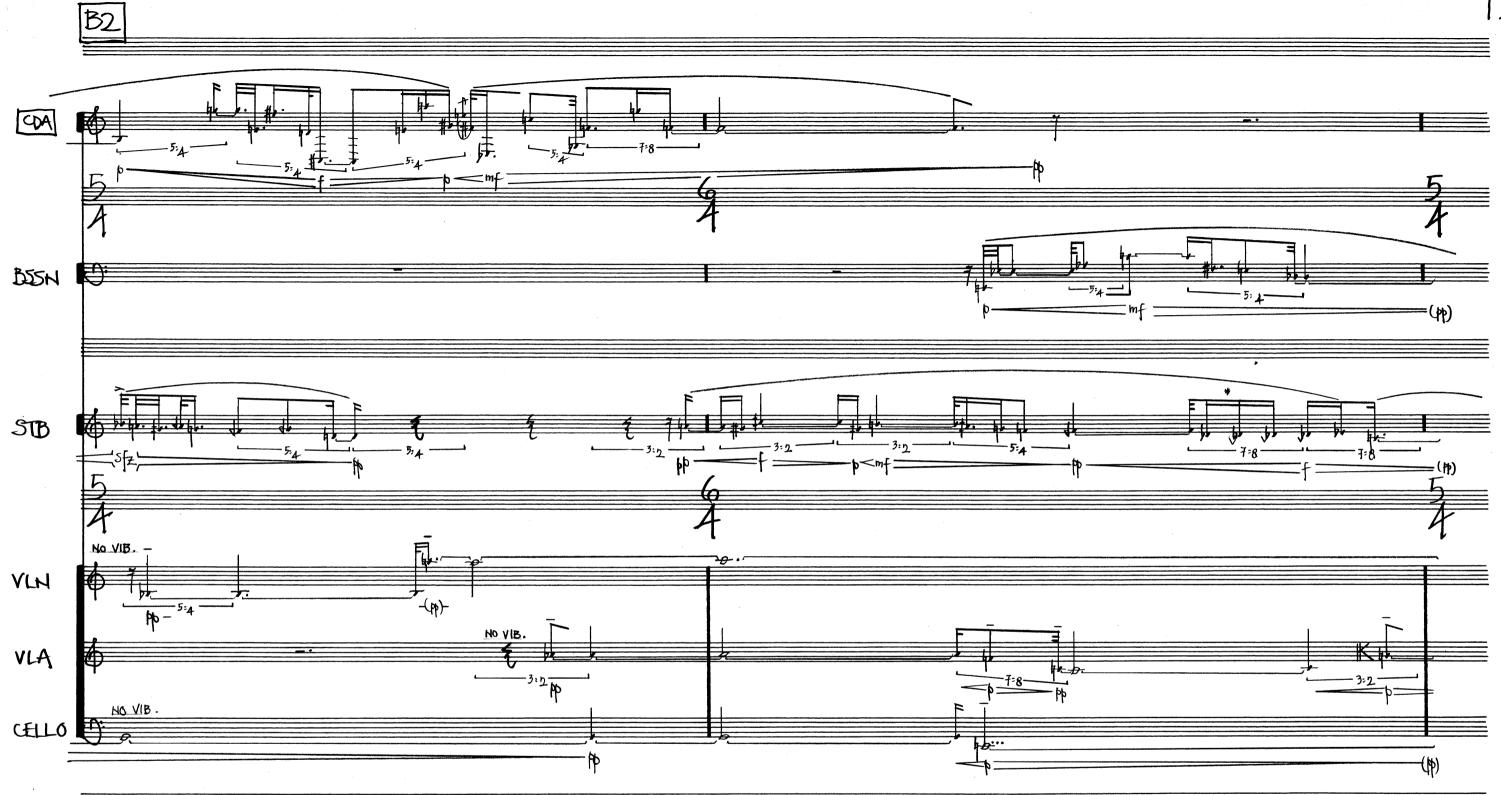












\*SOPRAND TROMBONE: WEARS RAPID DOWN/UP PORTAMENTO JUST
BEFORE BEGINNING OF NOTE

