Martin Hirsti-Kvam

La petite cathédrale (II) (2026)

for large ensemble

Written for **BIT20 Ensemble**

Commisioned by **Festspillene i Bergen**

Duration: **07'30**

Instrumentation:

Flute

Clarinet in Bb

3 ad hoc wind players:

- Player 1: Harmonica in F#, Harmonica in Bb, bird whistle 1 (see note)
- Player 2: Chromatic harmonica in C/C#, bird whistle (see note)
- Player 3: Slide whistle (lotus whistle) (see note)

Percussion (1 player):

- Chromatic harmonica in C/C#
- Diatonic harmonica in F
- Gran cassa (used as a resonating chamber for the speaker)
- Powerful bluetooth speaker (example: https://minirigs.co.uk/speakers/bluetooth-minirig-4)

Harp

Piano

2 violin

Viola

Cello

Contrabass

Placement:

The percussionist should be placed in front of the ensemble next to the conductor, so that the audience can see and follow the playing/lifting with the speaker. The lifting and filtering of the speaker and electronic sound has a visual component that directly corresponds to the concept of the piece, and is therefore important for the audience to see.

Technical requirements:

Two synced mono tracks:

- Electronic track going to the BT speaker
- Click track going to an earpiece for the conductor

Bird whistles:

The 3 bird whistles should be able to produce irregular and very high-pitched sounds. The ones I used in the composition process were these 3, but equivalent high pitched whistles can be used:

1. American robin (https://www.thomannmusic.no/quelle_est_belle_company_american_robin.htm)
2. Blue tit (https://www.thomannmusic.no/quelle_est_belle_company_blue_tit.htm)
3. Redstart (https://www.thomannmusic.no/quelle_est_belle_company_redstart.htm)

Slide whistle:

Slide whistle with a minimum range of G#-F (example: https://www.thomannmusic.no/goldon_lotus_flute.htm)

Performance notes:

Percussion:

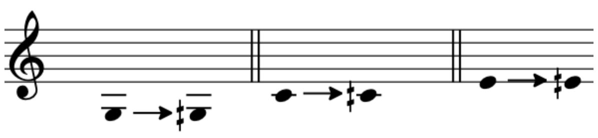
«Scrape»: The percussion part merely states «scrape» against the skin of the gran cassa, but the point is to filter and play with the speaker against the surface freely, using the gran cassa as a resonant chamber. It is also possible to experiment with small objects (coins or similar) to create rattling and buzzing sounds with the sounds of the speaker.

Strings:

- **M.S.T:** Molto sul tasto
- **M.S.P.:** Molto sul ponticello
- The music should be played non vibrato if else is not indicated
- **Bow on bridge:** Mute strings completely. Bow directly on bridge to produce white noise.

Harp:

Scordatura: 3 strings should be tuned a quarter tone sharp:



- **Hit strings:** hit string with palm of the hand held horizontally, creating a cluster sound. (https://harpnotation.com/de/notation-manual/percussive-sounds/hit-strings/)
- **Muted glissando:** Glissando with one hand, mute with other hand (https://harpnotation.com/de/notation-manual/sliding-sounds/glissando/damped-muted-glissando/)
- **«Slow cluster glissando»:** "The harpist holds his/her hand open and horizontal and slides the four fingers and the thumb slowly and repeatedly across the strings.» (https://harpnotation.com/de/notation-manual/sliding-sounds/glissando/slow-cluster-glissando/)
- **Pedal buzz:** hold the pedal between two pedal positions to create a buzzing sound (https://harpnotation.com/de/notation-manual/pedal-effects/pedal-buzz/)

Piano:

- **Pedal slam:** a fast exaggerated, accentuated pressing of the sustain pedal, which results in a percussive effect
- **Guero:** a glissando using a plastic card (credit card or similar) **"**on**"** the keys without depressing the keys, creating a percussive **"**guero-like**"** sound.
- **Harmonics:** The harmonics should be played by pressing down notated key (round notehead) with one hand, while pressing the finger on the particular node on the string inside the piano (diamond notehead).

Clarinet:

- **Multiphonics:** If the written multiphonic doesn't work on your instrument, try to find another multiphonic with similar pitch content that fits with the dynamic profile of the passage. Prioritize the top note if it is difficult to get both of the notes to sound.

SCORE IN C

La petite cathédrale (II)

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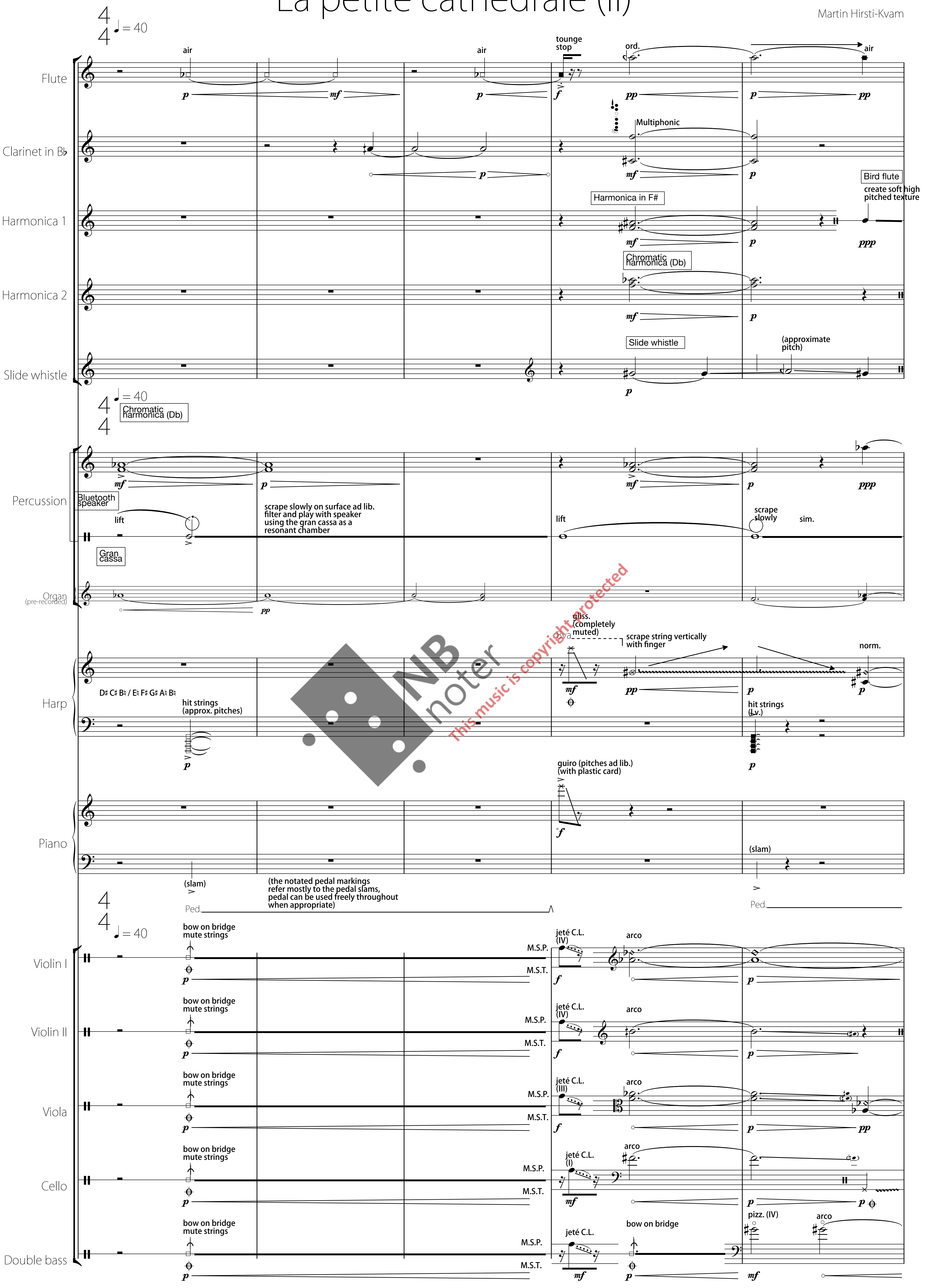
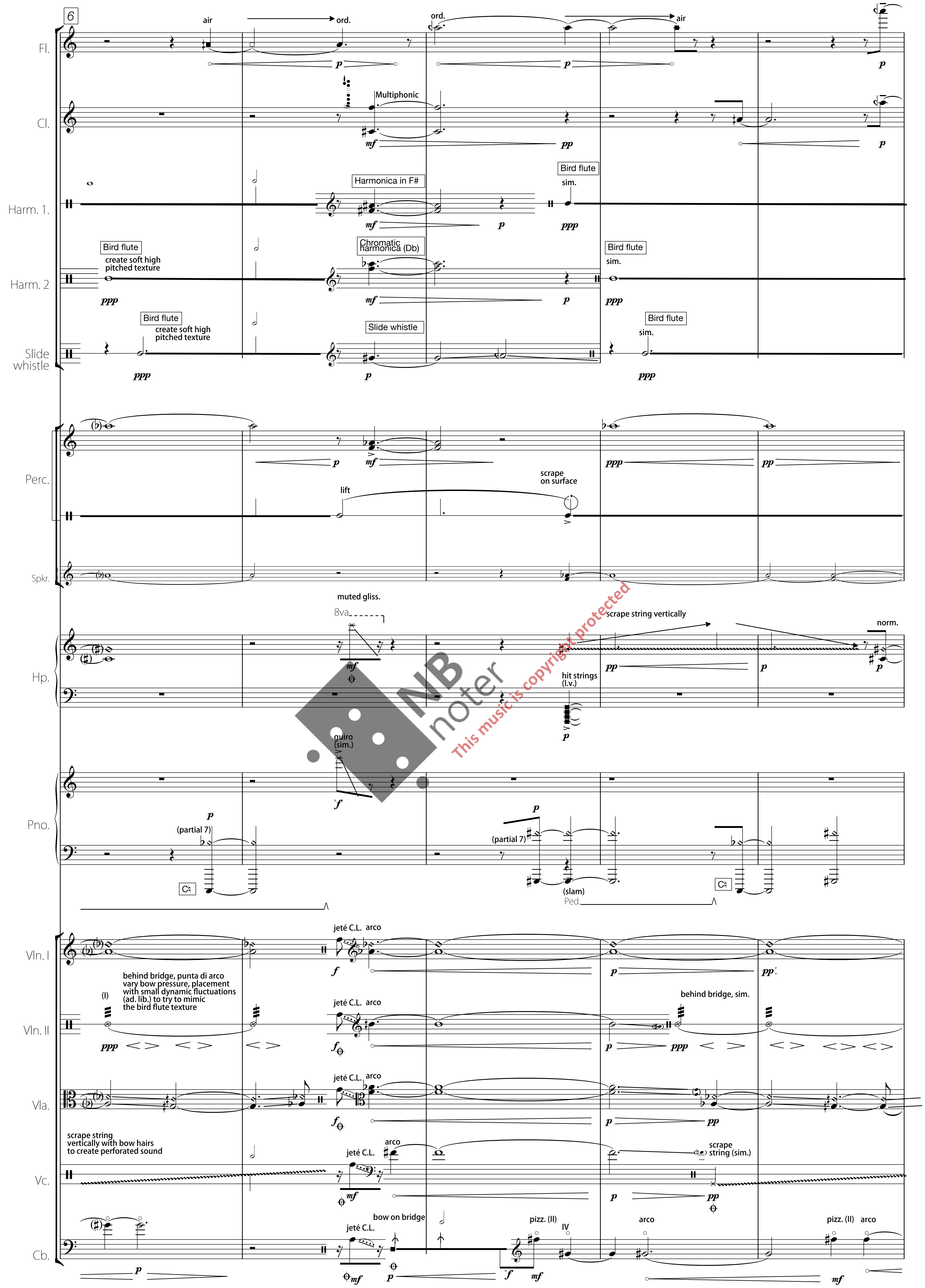
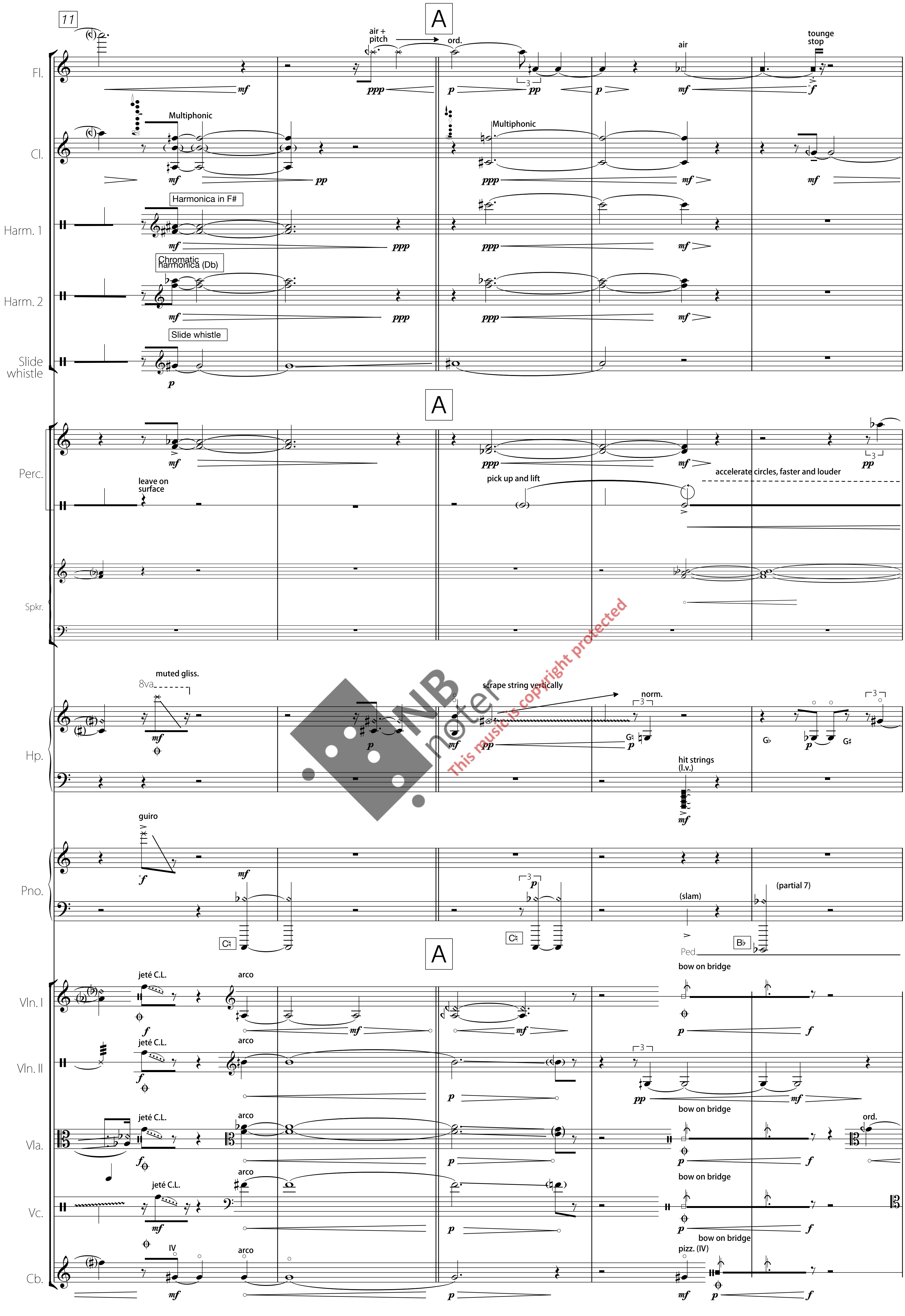



6
Fl.
air
ord.
air
Cl.
Multiphonic
Harm. 1.
Harmonica in F#
Bird flute
sim.
Harm. 2
Bird flute
create soft high pitched texture
Chromatic harmonica (Db)
Slide whistle
Perc.
lift
scrape on surface
Spkr.
muted gliss.
8va
scrape string vertically
norm.
hit strings (l.v.)
Hp.
guiro (sim.)
Pno.
(partial 7)
(slam)
Ped.
Vln. I
jeté C.L.
arco
Vln. II
behind bridge, punta di arco vary bow pressure, placement with small dynamic fluctuations (ad. lib.) to try to mimic the bird flute texture
behind bridge, sim.
Vla.
Vc.
scrape string vertically with bow hairs to create perforated sound
scrape string (sim.)
Cb.
bow on bridge
pizz. (II)
IV


11
A
Fl.
air + pitch
ord.
air
tounge stop
Cl.
Multiphonic
Harm. 1
Harmonica in F#
Harm. 2
Chromatic harmonica (Db)
Slide whistle
Perc.
leave on surface
pick up and lift
accelerate circles, faster and louder
Spkr.
Hp.
muted gliss.
8va
scrape string vertically
norm.
hit strings (l.v.)
Pno.
guiro
(slam)
(partial 7)
Ped.
Vln. I
jeté C.L.
arco
bow on bridge
Vln. II
Vla.
ord.
Vc.
Cb.
IV
pizz. (IV)


16
Fl.
Cl.
Harm. 1.
Harm. 2.
Slide whistle
Perc.
Spkr.
Hp.
Pno.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
air
air + pitch
ord.
air
ord.
air
Bird flute
sim.
Bird flute
sim.
Bird flute
sim.
Harmonica in F#
Chromatic harmonica (Db)
Slide whistle
lift
lift
muted gliss.
8va
hit strings (l.v.)
muted gliss.
8va
guiro
(slam)
8va
guiro
Ped.
jeté C.L.
arco
behind bridge, punta di arco vary bow pressure, placement with small dynamic fluctuations (ad. lib.) to try to mimic the bird flute texture
jeté C.L.
jeté C.L.
arco
jeté C.L.
jeté C.L.
arco
jeté C.L.
ord.
jeté C.L.
arco
(IV)
(III/IV)
jeté C.L.
jeté C.L.
pizz.
arco
pizz.
arco
jeté C.L.


21
B
ord.
Multiphonic
Fl.
Cl.
Harm. 1
Harm. 2
Slide whistle
Perc.
lift
Spkr.
Hp.
hit strings (l.v.)
C♯
C♭
A♭
Pno.
(slam)
Ped.
B♭
C♮
8va
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
bow on bridge
ord.
pizz. (IV)
arco
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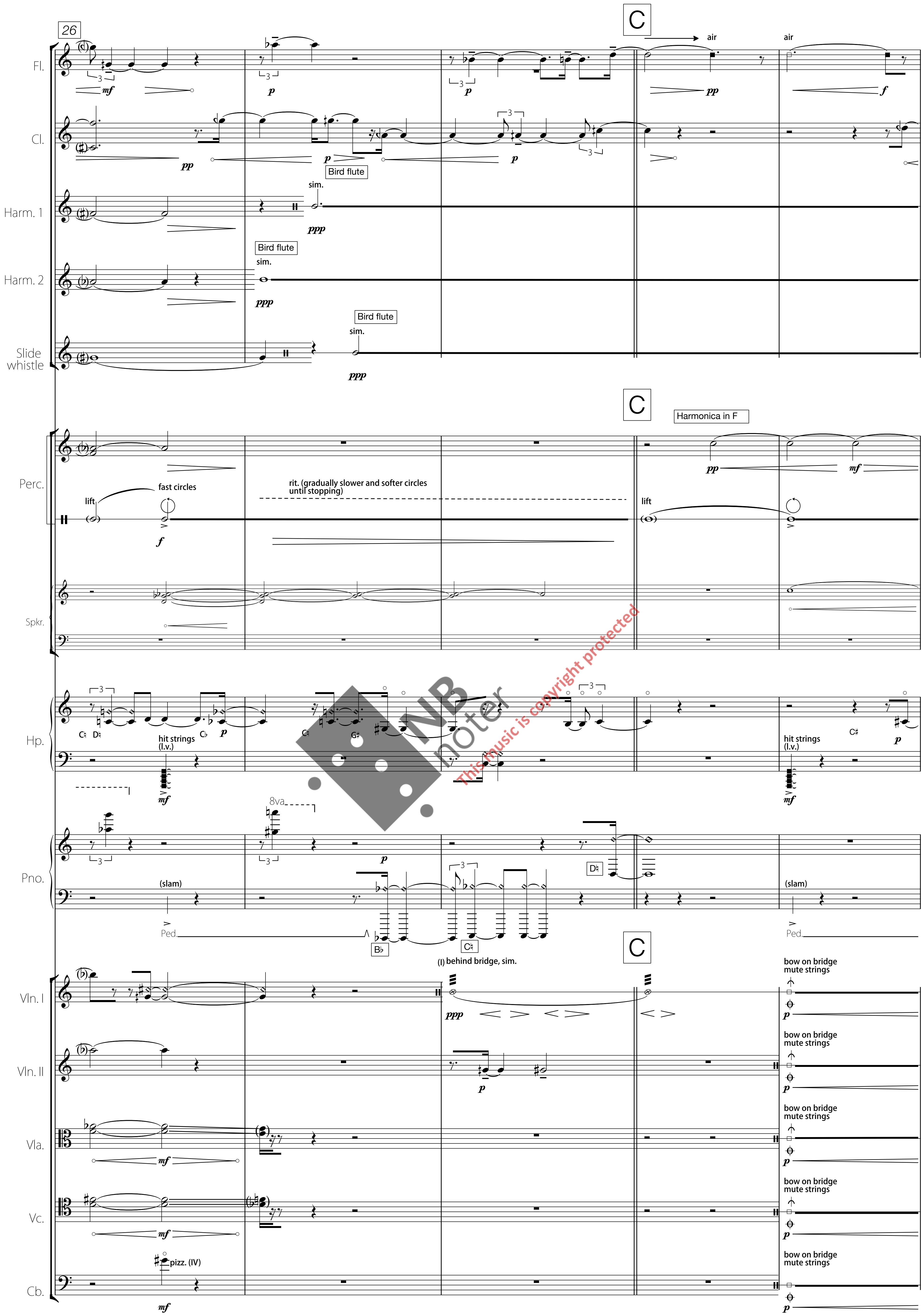
26
C
Fl.
Cl.
Harm. 1
Harm. 2
Slide whistle
Perc.
Spkr.
Hp.
Pno.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
air
Bird flute
sim.
Harmonica in F
lift
fast circles
rit. (gradually slower and softer circles until stopping)
hit strings (l.v.)
(slam)
Ped.
8va
(I) behind bridge, sim.
bow on bridge
mute strings
pizz. (IV)


31
Fl.
Cl.
Harm. 1
Harm. 2
Slide whistle
Perc.
Spkr.
Hp.
Pno.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
air
air + pitch
ord.
Multiphonic
Harmonica in Bb
Chromatic harmonica (C)
Slide whistle
lift
8va
muted gliss.
hit strings (l.v.)
guiro
(partial 11)
(slam)
Ped.
jeté C.L.
arco
bow on bridge
pizz. (III)
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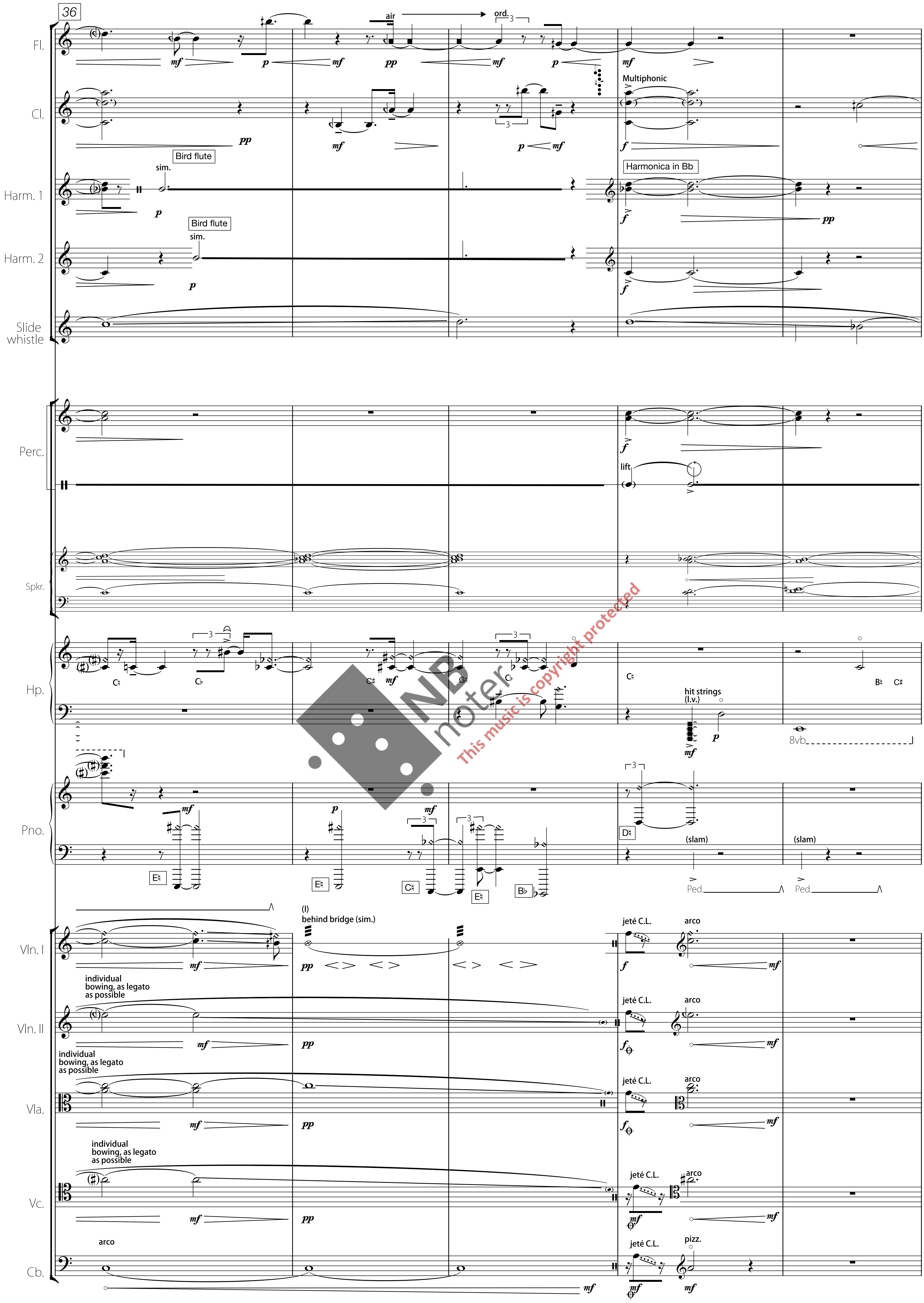
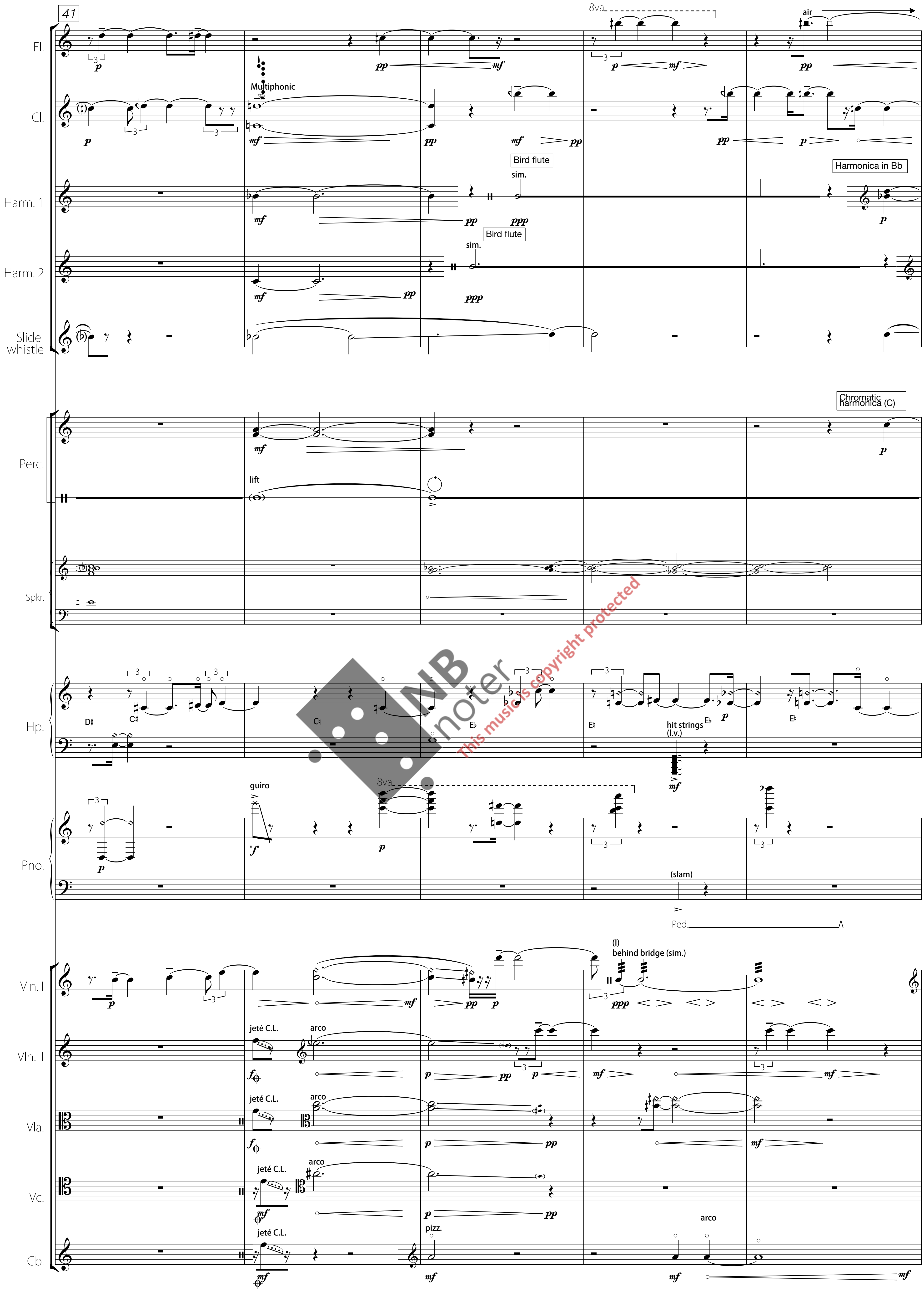

36
Fl.
air
ord.
Cl.
Multiphonic
Harm. 1
Bird flute
sim.
Harmonica in Bb
Harm. 2
Bird flute
sim.
Slide whistle
Perc.
lift
Spkr.
Hp.
hit strings (l.v.)
8vb
Pno.
(slam)
Ped
Vln. I
(I) behind bridge (sim.)
jeté C.L.
arco
Vln. II
individual bowing, as legato as possible
Vla.
Vc.
arco
Cb.
pizz.


41
Fl.
Cl.
Harm. 1
Harm. 2
Slide whistle
Perc.
Spkr.
Hp.
Pno.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
8va
air
Multiphonic
Bird flute
sim.
Harmonica in Bb
Chromatic harmonica (C)
lift
hit strings (l.v.)
guiro
(slam)
Ped.
behind bridge (sim.)
jeté C.L.
arco
pizz.


46
ord.
D
Fl.
Cl.
Harm. 1
Chromatic harmonica (C)
(breathe in)
Harm. 2
Slide whistle
(Db)
(breathe in)
Perc.
lift
(leave spkr. on surface, put away harmonica, grab mallet)
tremolo with gran cassa mallet in one hand, while lifting/scraping speaker against surface with the other
Spkr.
Hp.
C♯
hit strings (l.v.)
Pno.
D♮
E♮
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
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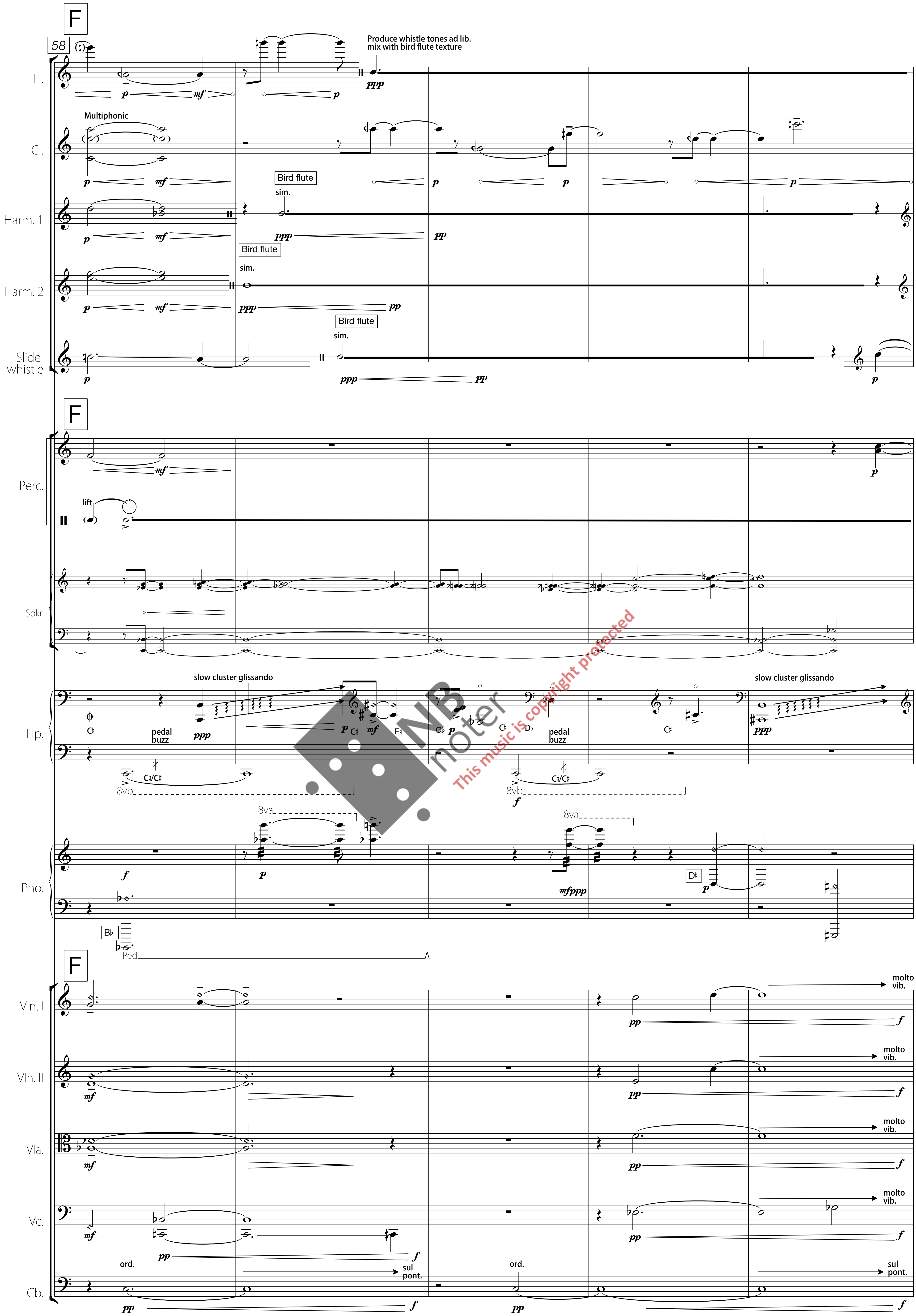
52
E
Fl.
Cl.
Multiphonic
Harm. 1
Harm. 2
Slide whistle
Harmonica in F
Perc.
put mallet away
lift spkr.
scrape
lift
Spkr.
Hp.
slow cluster glissando
pedal buzz
C♮/C♯
8vb
8va
Pno.
E♮
B♭
Ped.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
(III)
(IV)
ord.
sul pont.
Cb.


F
58
Produce whistle tones ad lib. mix with bird flute texture
Fl.
Multiphonic
Cl.
Bird flute
sim.
Harm. 1
Bird flute
sim.
Harm. 2
Bird flute
sim.
Slide whistle
F
Perc.
lift
Spkr.
slow cluster glissando
pedal buzz
slow cluster glissando
Hp.
8vb
8va
Pno.
Ped.
F
Vln. I
molto vib.
Vln. II
molto vib.
Vla.
molto vib.
Vc.
molto vib.
ord.
sul pont.
ord.
sul pont.
Cb.
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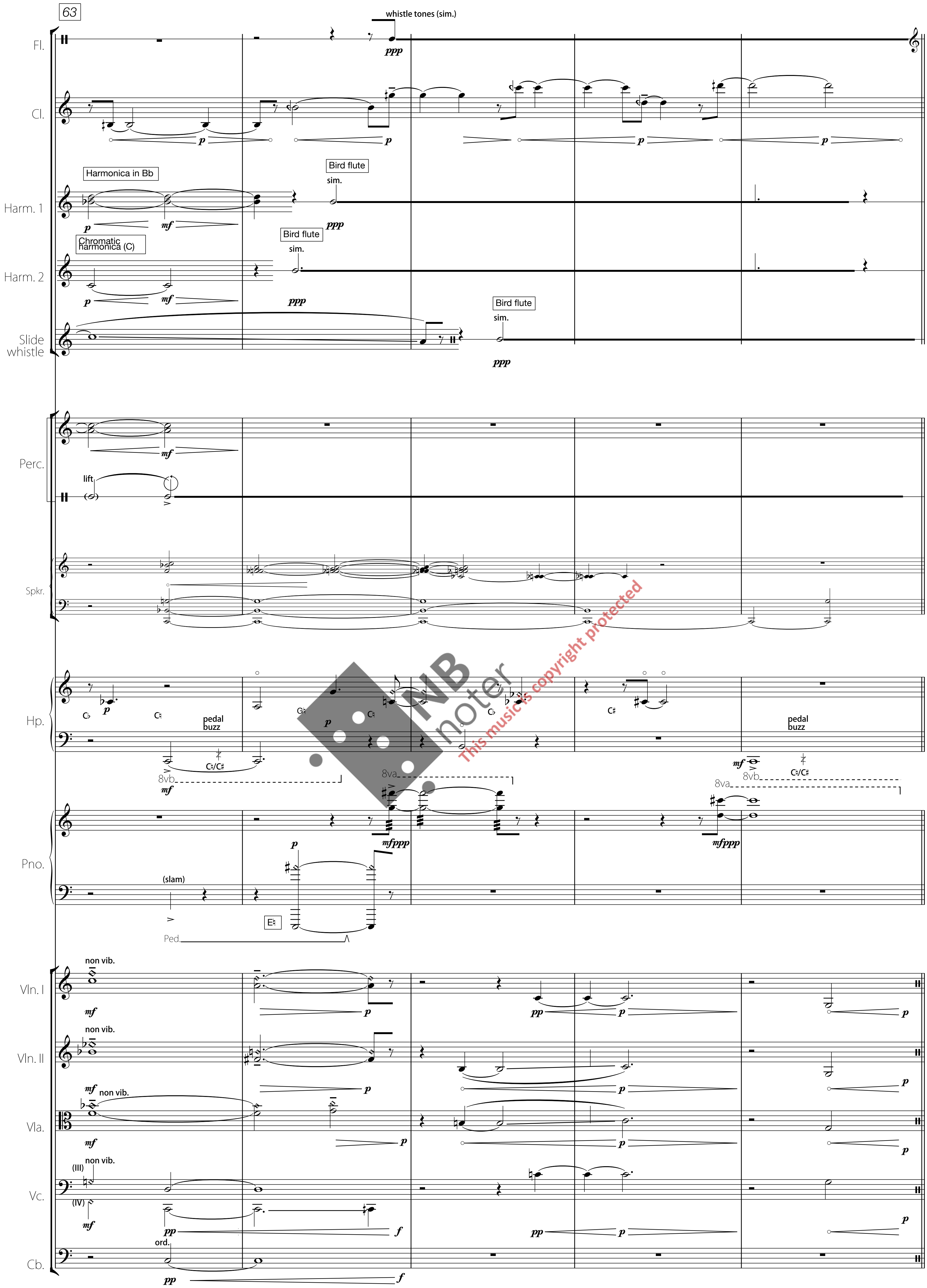
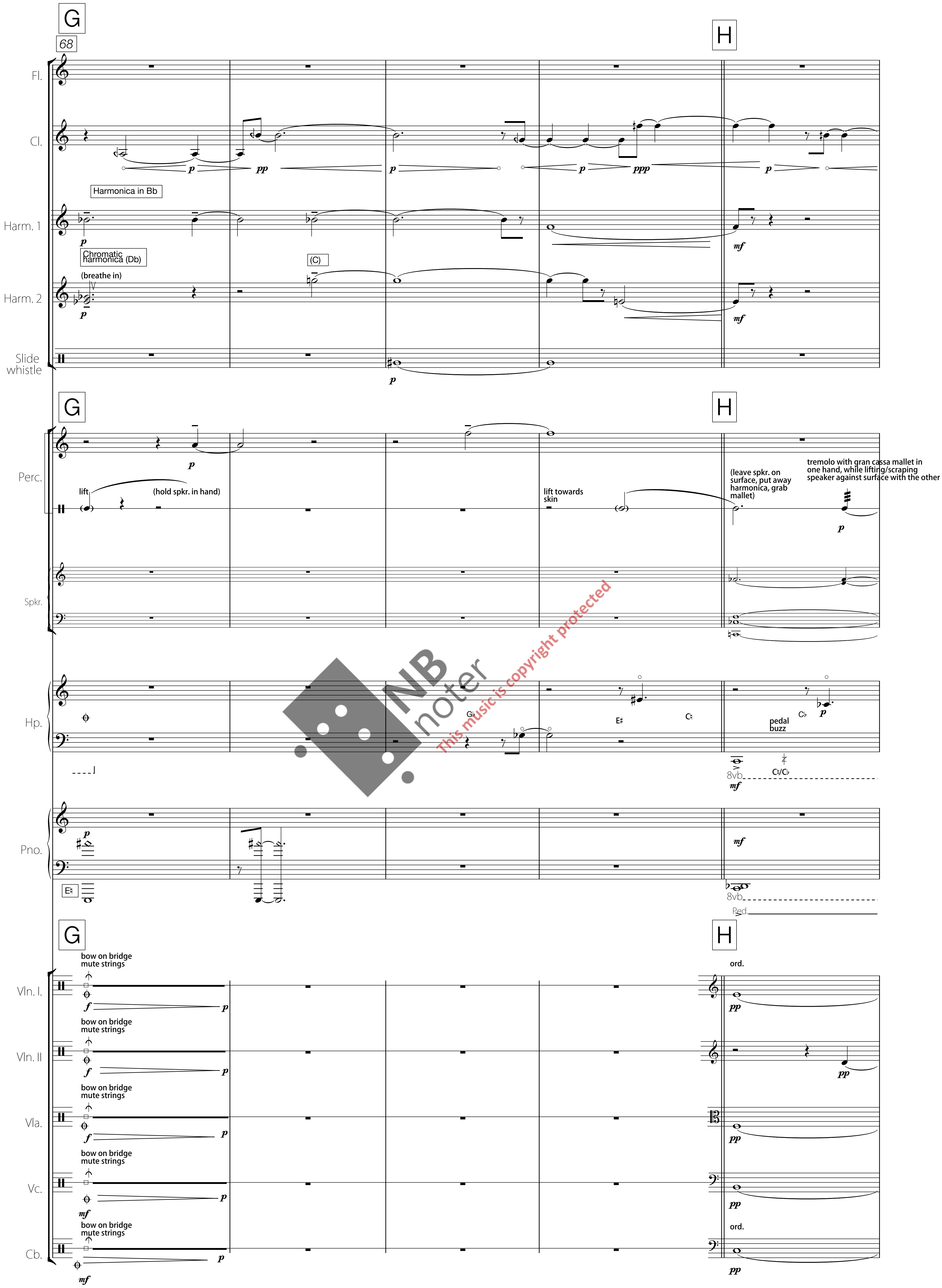
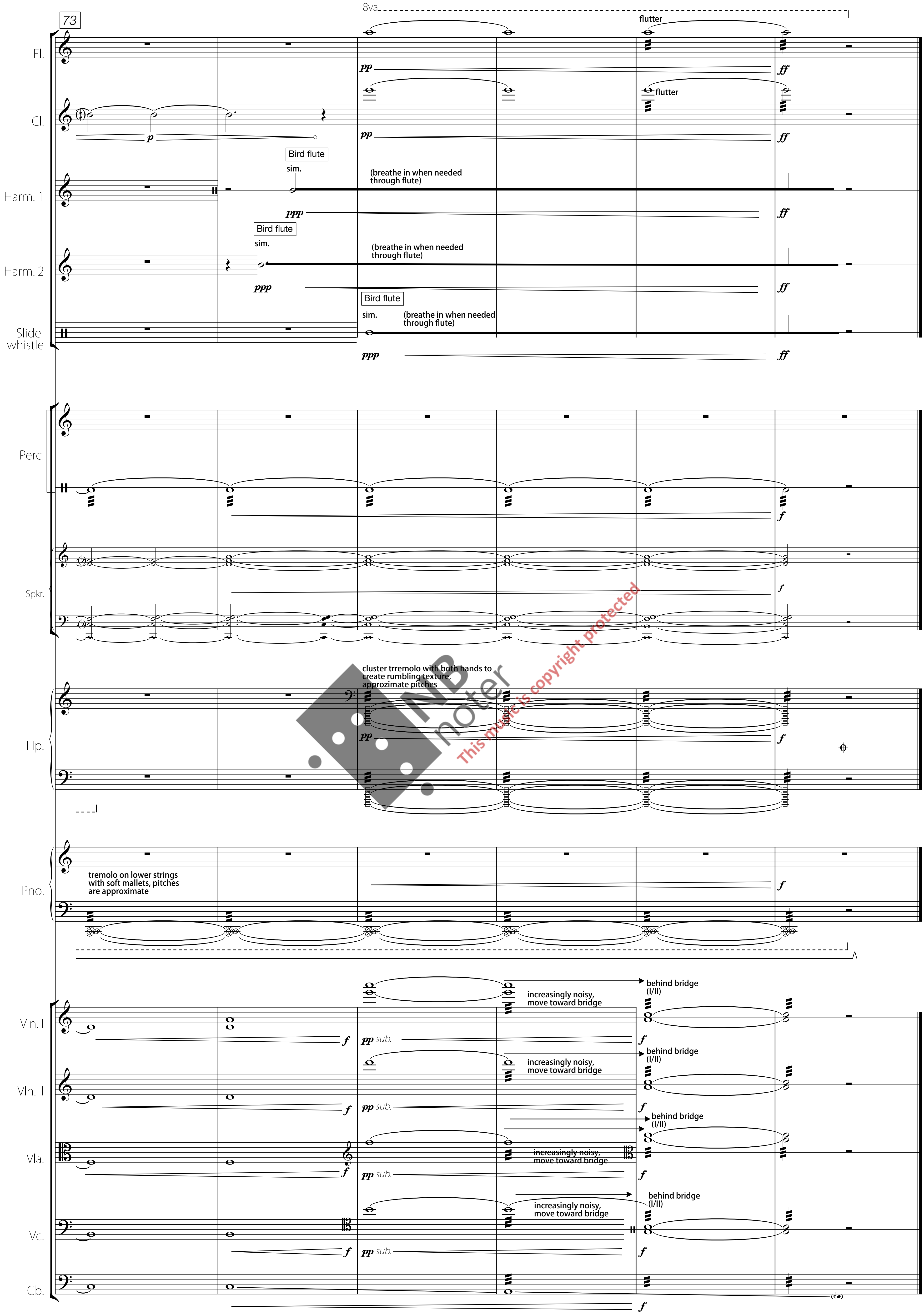

63
whistle tones (sim.)
Fl.
Cl.
Harmonica in Bb
Bird flute
sim.
Harm. 1
Chromatic harmonica (C)
Harm. 2
Slide whistle
Perc.
lift
Spkr.
Hp.
pedal buzz
8vb
8va
Pno.
(slam)
Ped.
non vib.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
ord.
Cb.


G
68
H
Fl.
Cl.
Harmonica in Bb
Harm. 1
Chromatic harmonica (Db)
(breathe in)
(C)
Harm. 2
Slide whistle
Perc.
lift
(hold spkr. in hand)
lift towards skin
(leave spkr. on surface, put away harmonica, grab mallet)
tremolo with gran cassa mallet in one hand, while lifting/scraping speaker against surface with the other
Spkr.
Hp.
pedal buzz
Pno.
8vb
Ped.
bow on bridge
mute strings
ord.
Vln. I.
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.


73
8va
flutter
Fl.
pp
ff
Cl.
p
flutter
Bird flute
sim.
(breathe in when needed
through flute)
Harm. 1
ppp
Bird flute
sim.
(breathe in when needed
through flute)
Harm. 2
ppp
Bird flute
sim.
(breathe in when needed
through flute)
Slide
whistle
Perc.
f
Spkr.
cluster trremolo with both hands to
create rumbling texture,
approzimate pitches
Hp.
tremolo on lower strings
with soft mallets, pitches
are approximate
Pno.
behind bridge
(I/II)
increasingly noisy,
move toward bridge
Vln. I
pp sub.
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
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