JAMES SELLARS

Keyboard Quintet

HOG RIVER MUSIC
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

Program Notes

With the *Keyboard Quintet,* my original idea was to compose a sonic blockbuster, by using electric violin and cello plus synthesizer, clarinet, and trumpet. Such instrumentation, as I planned, would make a bright, big, forceful sound, not far removed from rock.

Well, it didn't turn out that way. The opening movement, *Prelude,* is quite tame and lyrical; bits of tune, wistful motives, and lighthearted figures are tossed among the instruments, each presenting its own character and idiomatic technique.

The *Fugato* is the most assertive of the four movements. It's no textbook fugue, but determinedly fugal, imitative writing, at times textural, and rhythmically close to Bach's concerti. Bach would never have written these pitches or trafficked with such harmonies and progressions. Still, the synthesizer part is not far removed from the baroque, *basso continuo:* the bass lines and keyboard chords hold the texture together while the other instruments carry on with their counterpoint, subjects and answers, tunes against tunes, all in a syncopated six-four meter (which is not Bach at all).

The *Intermezzo* is an aria, song-like and melodic. At first, the clarinet carries a long-lined melody accompanied by *tremolo* violin and cello. (There is something Sibelius about this texture.) It's a ruminative melody, providing thematic material for each instrument to muse over. Neither quite melancholic nor nostalgic, it is but the portrait of melody, the semblance of melody. I love it because it is not the *real thing,* and here I do not mean to split intellectual hairs when I say that it is but the trace of a melody, a melody lost.

The last movement, *Finale* (sometimes known as eighth-note music), has long been typical of American composers. Perhaps it is, along with the *Intermezzo,* nothing more than a portrait of eighth-note, nervous Americana. Rhythmically, it jogs along in a duple (one-two, one-two) meter, though never far in spirit from the *Gigue* that ends many instrumental suites in the 17th and 18th century with dance instead of song. In this case, the ending fades off into nothing. The energy of the *Gigue* is soon dispersed, lost, and set apart.

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KEYBOARD QUINTET

James Sellars

I • Prelude

Allegro moderato (♩=88)

Electric Violin

B♭ Clarinet

B♭ Trumpet

Electric Cello

pp

Synthesizer

p

legato sempre

5

Vln.

p *pizz.* *mf* *mf*

Cl.

p *p*

Tpt.

Vcl.

pizz. *mf* *mf*

Synth.

9

Vln.

mf *pizz.* *p* *arco*

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

mf *arco* *pp*

Synth.

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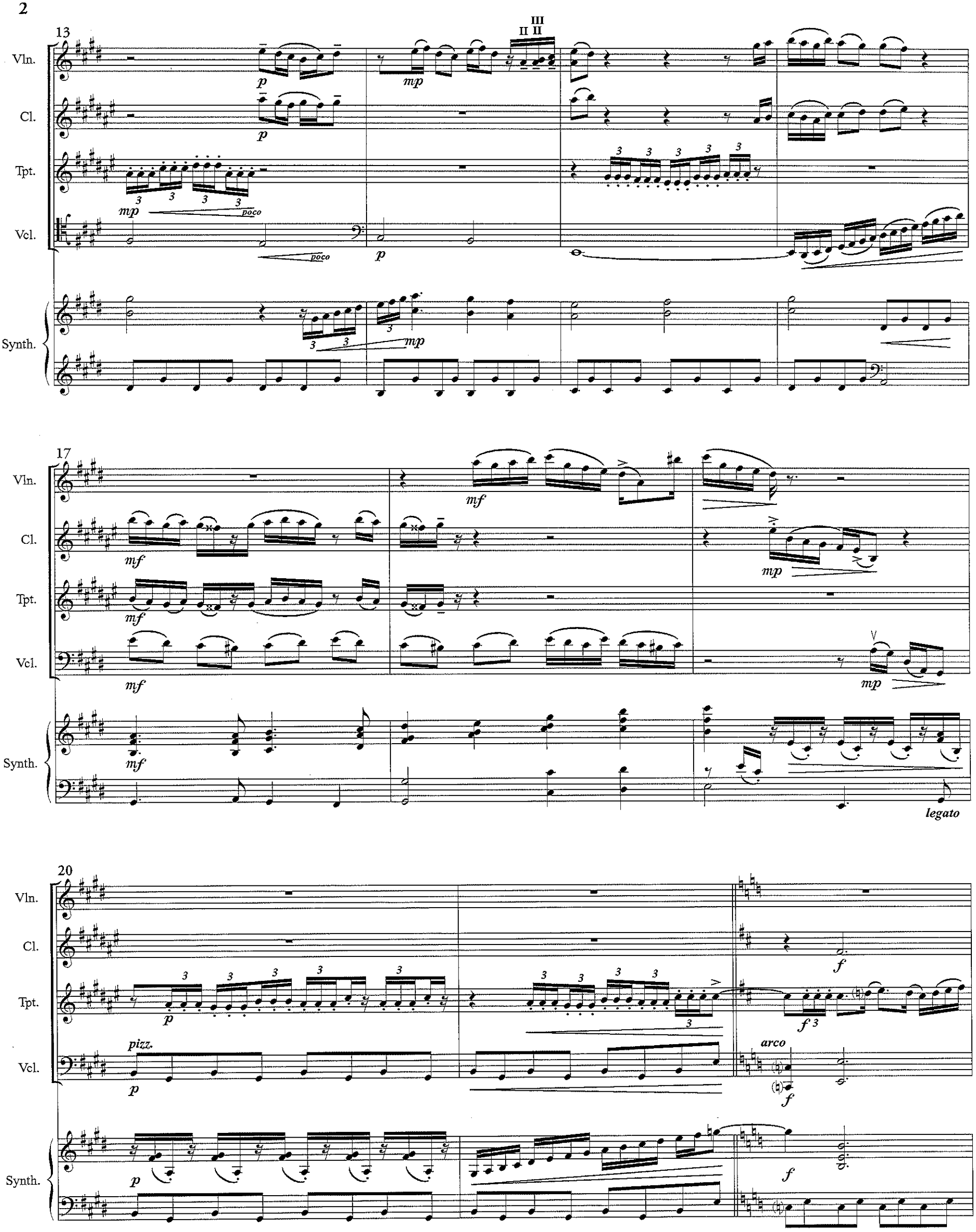

13
Vln.
Cl.
Tpt.
Vcl.
Synth.
poco
17
legato
20
pizz.
arco

23

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

f

p

p

27

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

V

0

II

p

p

non cresc.

p *non cresc.*

32

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

ppp

p

pizz.

p

arco

36

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

39

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

dolce

43

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

pizz.

f subito

48

Vln.
Cl.
Tpt.
Vcl.
Synth.

mf *ff* *arco* *p* *pp*

52

Vln.
Cl.
Tpt.
Vcl.
Synth.

p *f* *mf*

56

Vln.
Cl.
Tpt.
Vcl.
Synth.

pizz. *p*

60

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

arco

poco

p

Synth.

64

Vln.

p

Cl.

p

Tpt.

Vcl.

p

Synth.

pp

70

con sord.

pp

senza sord.

pizz.

p

Vln.

Cl.

pp

mf

Tpt.

pizz.

p 3 3 3 3 3

Vcl.

p

Synth.

75

Vln. *arco* *mf*

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl. *arco* *mf*

Synth. *mf*

79

Vln. *mf* *f*

Cl. 3 *f*

Tpt. *p* *f*

Vcl. *f*

Synth. *f*

83

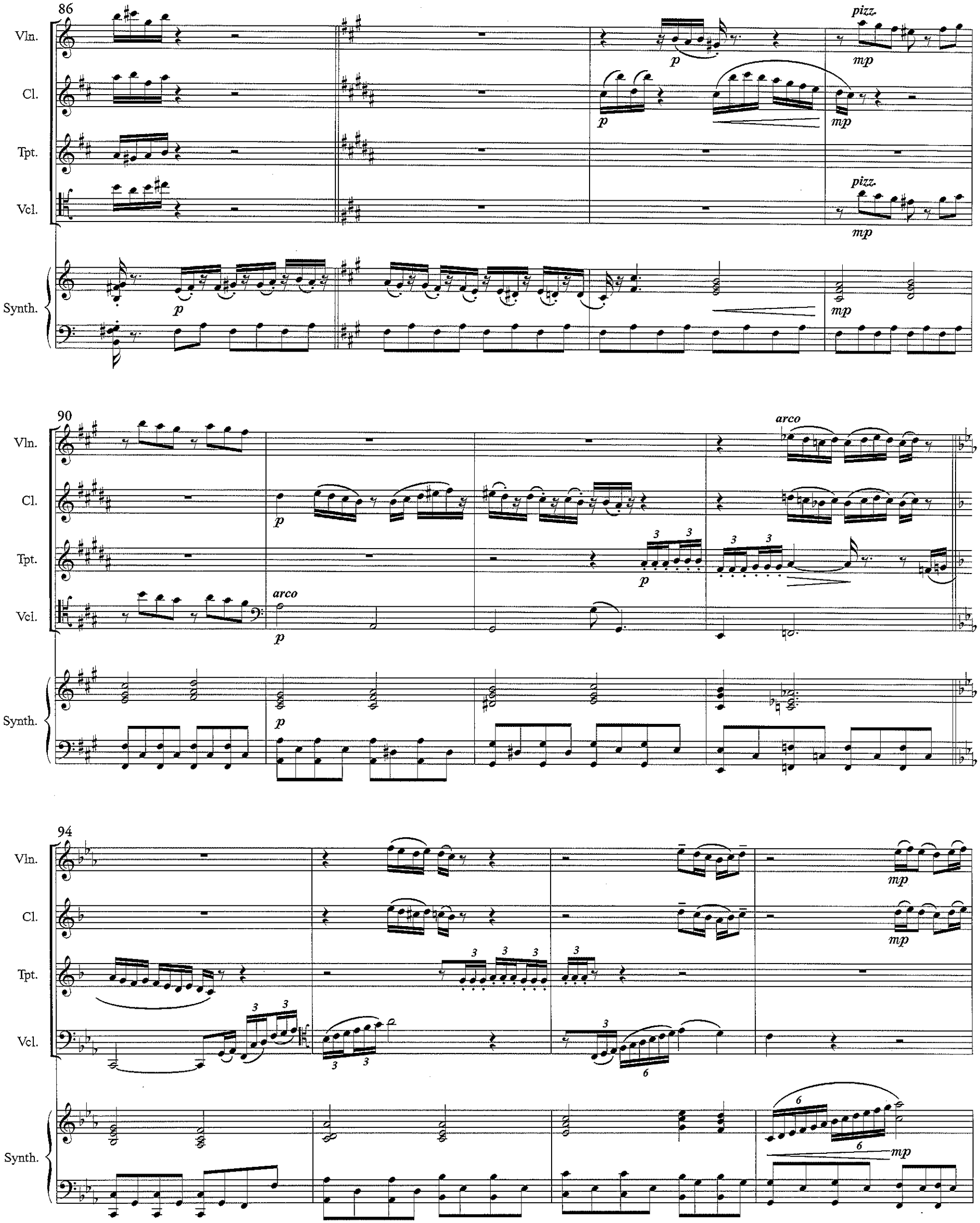
Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.


86
Vln.
Cl.
Tpt.
Vcl.
Synth.
pizz.
p
mp
90
arco
94

98

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

mp *p* *poco* *p* *mp*

102

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

p *mp* *legato sempre* *poco* *mp*

106

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

p *poco* *p* *p*

110

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

114

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

118

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

non rit.

II • Fugato

Lively (♩.=63)

Vln.
Cl.
Tpt.
Vcl.
Synth.

f

mp

6

pizz.

mf

10

14

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

arco

mf

Synth.

18

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

22

Vln.

f

Cl.

f

Tpt.

Vcl.

f

Synth.

f

26

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

mf

pizz.

Vcl.

Synth.

30

Vln.

mp

Cl.

mp

Tpt.

mp

arco

Vcl.

mp

Synth.

mp

34

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

38

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

f

mf

42

mf

46

V

50

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

54

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

58

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

mp

Synth.

mp

62

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

p

mf

mf

mf

66

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

mf

tr

tr

tr

70

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

f

f

mf

f

74

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

f

78

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

82

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

ff

86

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

90

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

94

Vln.

Cl.

mf

Tpt.

mf

mf

Vcl.

mf

Synth.

mf

98

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

ff

f

103

sfz

III • Intermezzo

Andante (♩=ca.76)

Vln.
Cl.
Tpt.
Vcl.
Synth.

pp

9

poco

19

non trem.

28

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

pp

p

p sostenuto

37

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

46

non trem.

Vln.

p

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

pp

55

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

60

Vln.

Cl.

f

f

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

mf

66

(trem.)

Vln.

p

pp

p

Cl.

p

Tpt.

dolce

p

Vcl.

pizz.

p

pp

p

Synth.

p legato e sostenuto

75

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

non trem.
con sord.

p

85

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

(trem.)

95

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

p

pizz.

p

pp

pp

(trem.)

pp

106

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

mp

Synth.

mp

mf

115

Vln.

(trem.)

pp

Cl.

pp

Tpt.

Vcl.

(trem.)

pp

Synth.

p

125

Vln.

pppp

Cl.

ppp

Tpt.

Vcl.

pppp

Synth.

IV • Finale

♩=ca.152

Vln.
Cl.
Tpt.
Vcl.
Synth.

mf
ff
f
f

7

p
con sord.
p
p

13

f
mf
mf
p
f
p
f

19

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

senza sord.

f

24

f

pizz.

p

p

30

p

p

arco

p

36

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

f

f

mp

f

f

42

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

p

pizz.

p

p legato

47

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

p

p

p

con sord.

p

p

52

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

56

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

f subito

p

f subito

f subito

p

f subito

senza sord.

f subito

arco

f subito

p

f subito

f subito

p

f subito

62

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

f subito

f subito

f subito

f subito

f subito

Ped.

67

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

p

71

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

p

75

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

con sord.

pp

pp possibile

Ped.

Ped.

80

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

85

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

pizz.

Synth.

non pedale

91

senza sord.

Vln.

mp *mf*

Cl.

p *mp* *mf*

Tpt.

arco

Vcl.

p

Synth.

p *mf*

97

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

cresc. poco a poco

f

pizz.

arco

103

con sord.

p

mp

mf

109

115

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

f

121

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

f

126

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

f

ff

130

Vln. Cl. Tpt. Vcl. Synth.

ff *p* *ff* *p* *ff* *mp* *ff* *p*

pizz. *arco* *pizz.* *arco* (l.h. *pizz.*) *pizz.* *arco*

p

136

Vln. Cl. Tpt. Vcl. Synth.

f *f* *f* *f* *mf* *mf*

142

Vln. Cl. Tpt. Vcl. Synth.

mf *mf*

146

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

151

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

mf

Vcl.

Synth.

157

Vln.

p

Cl.

p

Tpt.

p

Vcl.

mp

Synth.

p

163

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

mp

168

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

pizz.

p

174

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

mf

f

ff articulato

f sempre

ff

180

Vln.

Cl.

Tpt.

Vcl.

Synth.

p

186

192

slow arpeggio

ppp