

five foci
for wind quintet

Nikolaos-Laonikos Psimikakis-Chalkokondylis

five foci

for wind quintet

Instrumentation:

flute (doubling Piccolo)
oboe (doubling Cor Anglais)
clarinet in Bb (doubling A clarinet and bass clarinet)
horn in F
bassoon

The score is transposed (clarinet sounds a major 2nd lower than written, bass clarinet sounds a major 9th lower than written, and the horn sounds a 5th lower than written).

Duration: about 6 minutes

Program Note

In this wind quintet I tried to explore both writing music down on paper as a way to compose music (i.e. taking a principal part in affecting the composition itself other than just being a medium for writing my ideas down on paper) and the timbral soundscape that the diverse instruments of the wind quintet can produce. The pieces can be performed in any order (the listing below is alphabetical).

“hauraton” is a piece focusing on musical materials. Each instrument's line in the first section is derived from materials I took from other scores (such as Varese's *Density 21.5*, a Bach cantata and many others). I wrote down the musical phrases I wanted to use (some of them famous passages for the instruments, some others not), distilled them in rhythms and pitches, and then after studying them and assimilating them, I wrote out the lines of the instruments by using various pitch and rhythmic material from what I had gathered, but used and mixed in an intuitive way. From the second section onwards, some instruments' lines remain exactly the same, some change slightly (i.e. using same rhythmic material but different pitch material, by moving all pitches one step to the left, by moving all rhythms one step to the right etc), and one of the parts changes drastically (and remains like that until the end of the piece, or is changed slightly), until all instruments (last one being the flute) have changed their line. The last section was written completely intuitively, but is of course influenced by the materials I used in the previous piece.

“kaleidophone” is a piece which focuses on the various sounds each of the wind quintet instruments can produce. The number of seconds before the texts is the amount of time the players have to wait before starting to perform their activity/activities. The players start all together, and as soon as any one of the players hits their stand or stamps their foot on the ground loudly, they move on to the next box.

“narcosis” (νάρκωσις) means “anaesthesia” in Greek, and it's the title of a piano piece I wrote in 2007. To write this wind quintet movement, I focused on three seconds from the recording of the piece and played them reversed and transcribed down the pitches.. That passage consists of just ten notes, which are held over (in the original version) to form a sustained chord. So in the reversed version, it's notes that form a chord and then dissolve, moving on to the next one and then to silence (going backwards). The piece is performed by playing the first panel for the duration indicated, taking breaths freely (but as seamlessly as possible), and the players are given a secondary note to which they can “jump” for a few seconds before returning to their main note. All secondary notes are primary notes of other instruments, thus creating a constant flux of dove-tailing, which depends on the players and their listening of the others playing.

“omega” focuses on a fundamental aspect of wind playing – breathing. It is also an attempt to see how the parts can be more than the whole (i.e. the idea that there is no score for a particular piece, but only parts and the music is generated through the performance of each individual part). The players choose one of the notes of each segment and play it at the dynamic indicated for as long as they can. Then, they remain silent for half that duration before they play the next one. In the last section, they just produce breath sounds. The piece is called “omega” because in this piece, the beginning is going to be more or less the same, but it is the ending that is more important, because that's when the main differences between each player will show (in terms of how long one can hold their breath).

“parathyra” (παράθυρα) means “windows” in Greek, and I used this title in the piece because there is constant material that runs through each instrument and I have chosen when this material will be audible or not. This piece focuses on a simple function (that of opening and closing windows) that is applied in this constantly running musical material. Apart from opening windows to the material, I also “froze” some of the material (by sustaining the last note until the next one), freezing more and more lines until in the end all the lines are almost static.

hauraton

focus on materials

Nikolaos-Laonikos Psimikakis-Chalkokondylis

coldly, but different each time (♩ = 72-81)

Flute

play softly together with the others

Cor Anglais

play softly together with the others

Clarinet in B♭

play softly together with the others

Horn in F

play softly together with the others

Bassoon

play softly together with the others

Fl.

Cor. A.

B♭ Cl.

Hn.

Bsn.

3"

Fl. ¹²

Cor. A.

B \flat Cl.

Hn.

Bsn.

stand out of the others, but not too much louder

5

Fl. ¹⁸

Cor. A.

B \flat Cl.

Hn.

Bsn.

(to oboe)

4"

Fl. 23

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Hn.

Bsn.

stand out of the others, but not too much louder

5

Fl. 29

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Hn.

Bsn.

Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.

mf *mf* *mf* *f*

stand out of the others, but not too much louder

Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.

mf *mf*

3"

45

Fl.

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Hn.

Bsn.

stand out of the others, but not too much louder

mf *mf* *mf* *f*

51

Fl.

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Hn.

Bsn.

mf *mf*

5"

56

Fl.

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Hn.

Bsn.

mf *mf* *mf* *f*

62

Fl.

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

Hn.

Bsn.


mf *mf*

3"

kaleidophone

flute (piccolo)	1" low tremolos, without any pauses in between or long low notes with 1" rests in between	frantic key-click for 1-2" with 1" rests in between or 1" short high-pitched flutter-tongued notes or really loud, then really soft notes on the piccolo	don't play	0" [piccolo] play a passage for the piccolo from memory but slower than it's supposed to be and very softly or play random fingerings
oboe (cor anglais)	0" long low notes <ff> or triple-tongueing in the high register twice then as above	the highest pitch you can play, ad lib with 1-2" rests in between or 3" play any two notes sharply	2" very short, pinched sounds from the high register at least 1" silence after every three sounds	2" mouthpiece noises very frantically in the beginning, and slowly change towards very scarce
Bb and A clarinet	0" medium length low notes with 3" <ff> rests in between	as high as possible, short notes, decrescendo with 4" rest in between or 1" breath sounds	subtones, ad lib and/or 1" play with the Bb clarinet into the A clarinet the lowest notes you can play, scarcely	4" mouthpieces noises scarcely or play glissandi upwards with 3" rests in between
horn in F	don't play	0" play two quick glissandi in the high register then play the lowest note as softly as possible and wait	2" long breath sounds with 2-3" rests in between or play any one note twice	don't play
bassoon	2" frantic slap-tongueing in low register as continuous as possible	don't play	0" scarce key-clicks, soft you may play 2 slap-tongued notes at any point, if you wish	3" very scarce mouthpiece noises, slowly shifting towards very rapid mouthpiece noises

kaleidophone

flute (piccolo)	<p>1" play three flap-tongued notes, then play four keyclicks, then wait</p> <p>or</p> <p>make five really weird sounds with your flute</p>	<p>1" play wobbly sounds with mouthpiece only</p> <p>don't wobble too much</p> <p>try to tune in to pitches of other instruments</p>	<p>0" play the flumbone (flute without mouthpiece) and try to imitate whatever the horn player plays</p>	<p>1" play a long note</p> <p>dynamics/expression ad lib</p> <p>hit the stand together with everyone else to end the piece</p>
oboe (cor anglais)	<p>1" play three high notes as softly as possible and very long</p>	<p>2" play any one note in as many different ways as possible (soft, loud, short, long, double-tongueing etc) with 1" rests in between</p>	<p>2" try to play a jolly tune (improvise if needed)</p>	<p>3" play a long note</p> <p>dynamics/expression ad lib</p> <p>hit the stand together with everyone else to end the piece</p>
Bb and A clarinet	<p>1" medium length low notes with 3"  rests in between</p>	<p>3" as high as possible, short notes, decrescendo with 4" rest in between</p> <p>or</p> <p>breath sounds</p>	<p>1" play an ugly multiphonic</p> <p>then try to play a jolly tune (improvise if needed)</p>	<p>3" play a long note</p> <p>dynamics/expression ad lib</p> <p>hit the stand together with everyone else to end the piece</p>
horn in F	<p>1" play four notes then play scarce mouthpiece noises</p> <p>or</p> <p>play 10 key-clicks quickly and shout</p>	<p>4" play two quick glissandi in the high register then play the lowest note as softly as possible and wait</p>	<p>2" play three notes, one high one middle then one low (durations ad lib)</p> <p>then try to imitate the flute player and what they play</p>	<p>3" play a long note</p> <p>dynamics/expression ad lib</p> <p>hit the stand together with everyone else to end the piece</p>
bassoon	<p>1" play the pitches of a passage for the bassoon but with all durations equal and not too fast</p>	<p>5" reed and mouthpipe noises</p> <p>shout once</p>	<p>0" slap-tongue like crazy for 2" then rest for 1"</p> <p>or</p> <p>try to play a jolly tune (improvise if needed)</p>	<p>3" play a long note</p> <p>dynamics/expression ad lib</p> <p>hit the stand together with everyone else to end the piece</p>

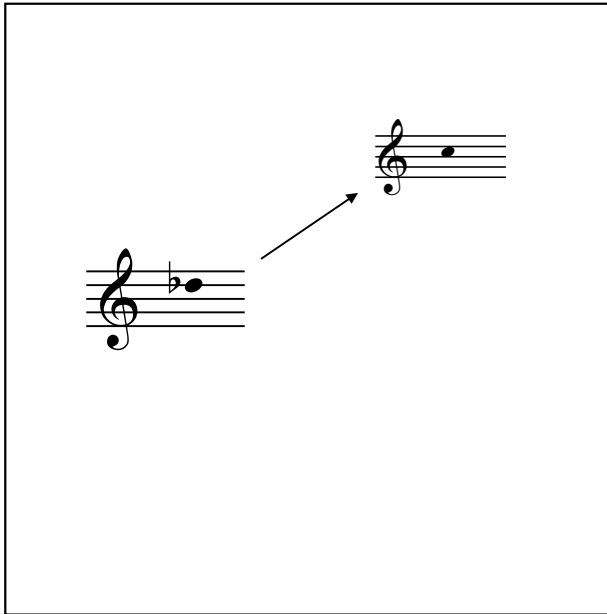
narcosis

Nikolaos-Laonikos Psimikakis-Chalkokondylis

flute

0:10

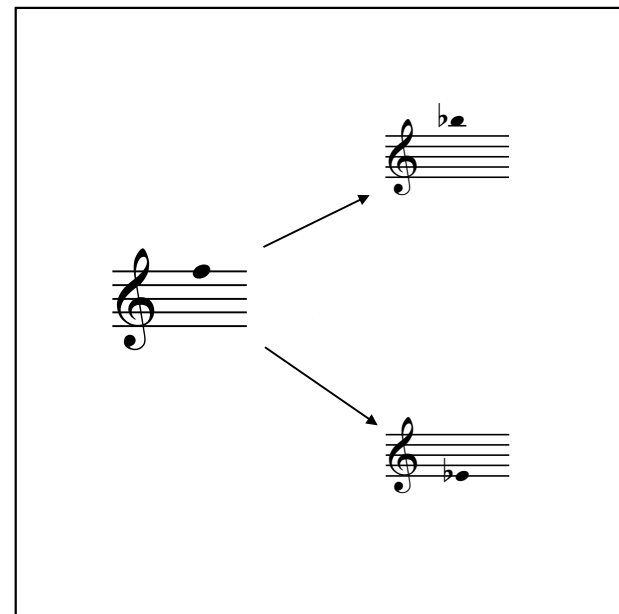
0:45



as softly
as possible

0:50

1:10



as softly
as possible

(the piece lasts approximately 1:30)

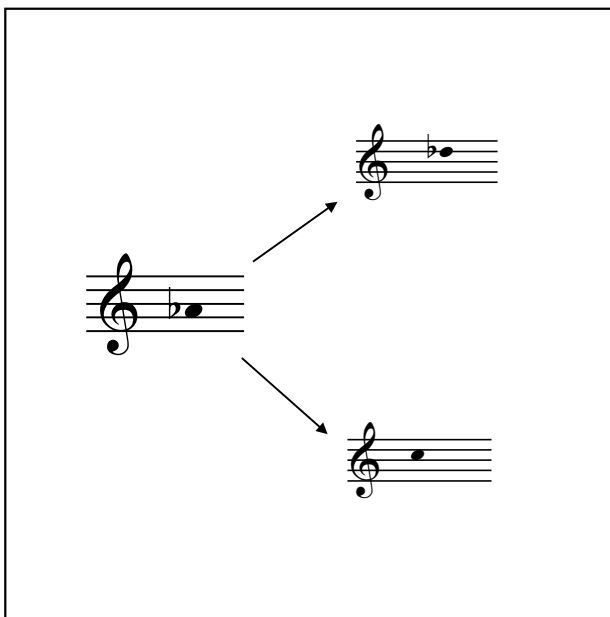
narcosis

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Oboe

0:03

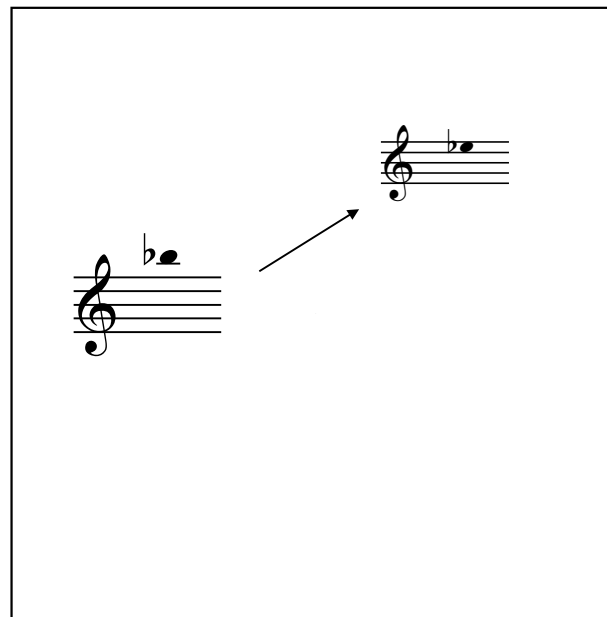
0:55



as softly
as possible

0:60

1:25



as softly
as possible

(the piece lasts approximately 1:30)

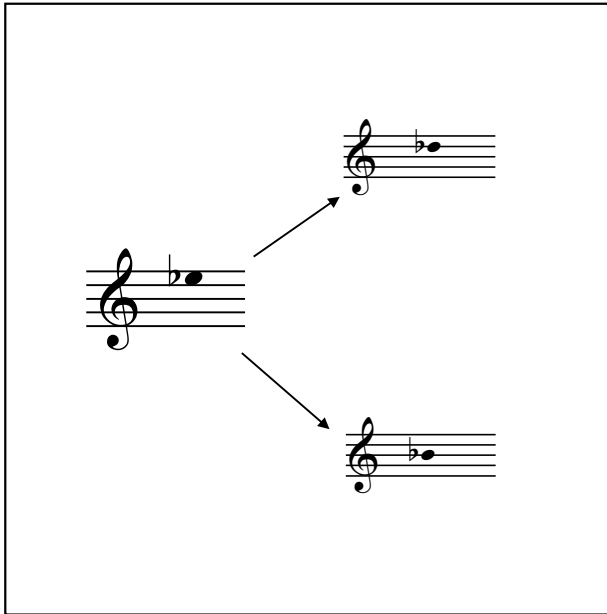
narcosis

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B \flat Clarinet

0:01

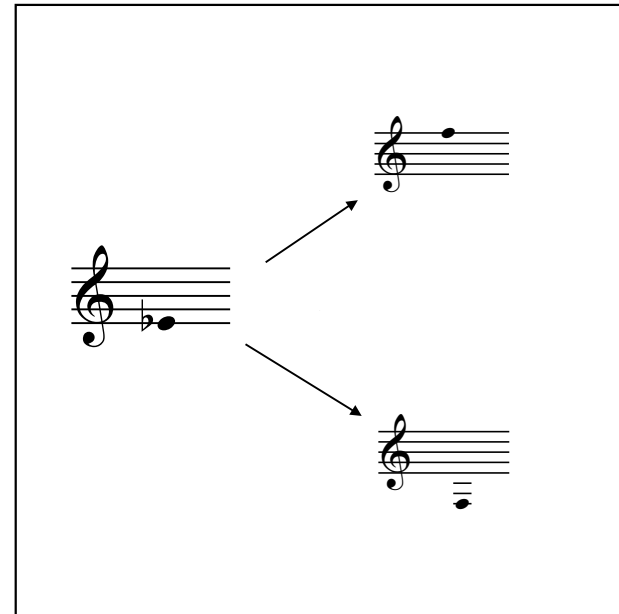
0:35



as softly
as possible

0:40

1:05



as softly
as possible

(the piece lasts approximately 1:30)

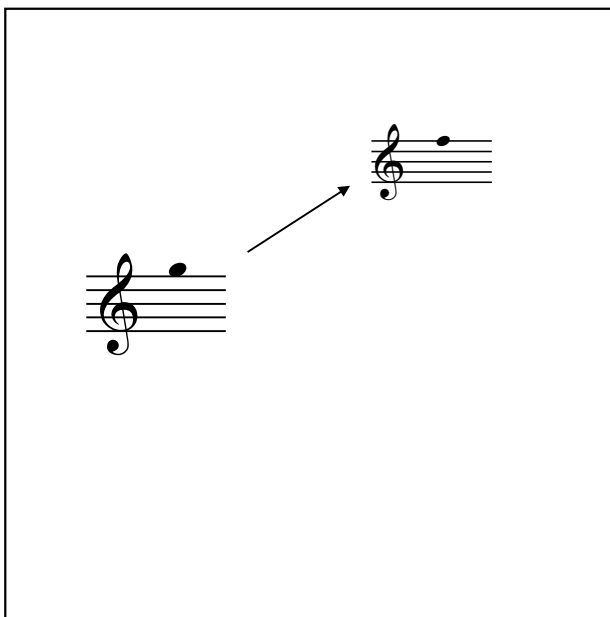
narcosis

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Horn in F

0:17

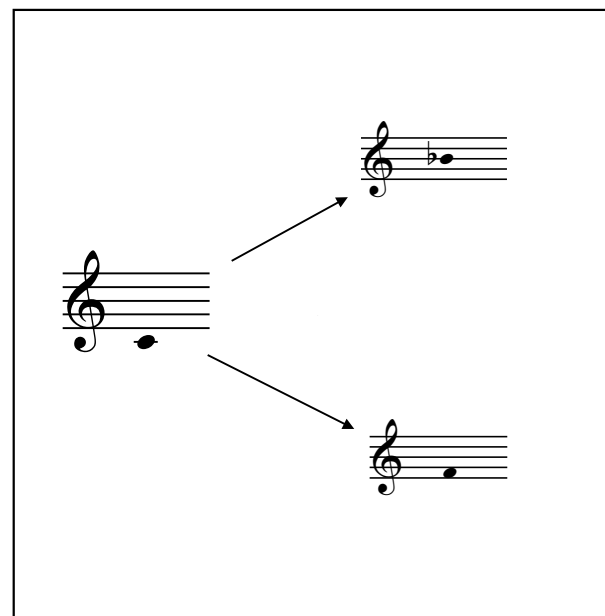
1:00



as softly
as possible

1:04

1:20



as softly
as possible

(the piece lasts approximately 1:30)

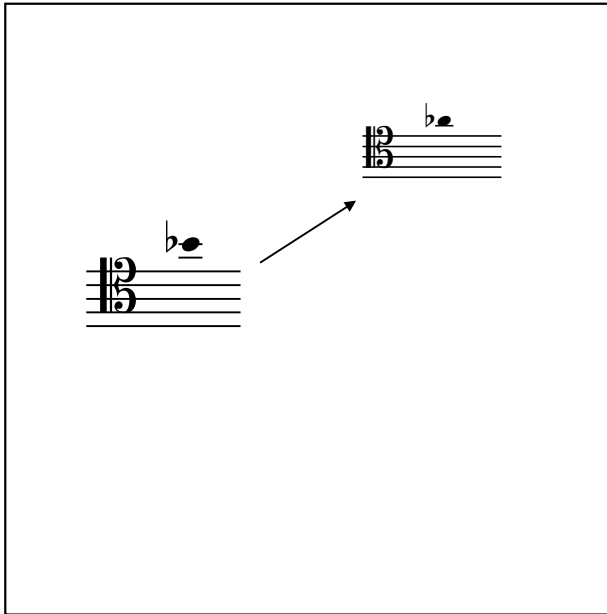
narcosis

Nikolaos-Laonikos Psimikakis-Chalkokondylis

Bassoon

0:10

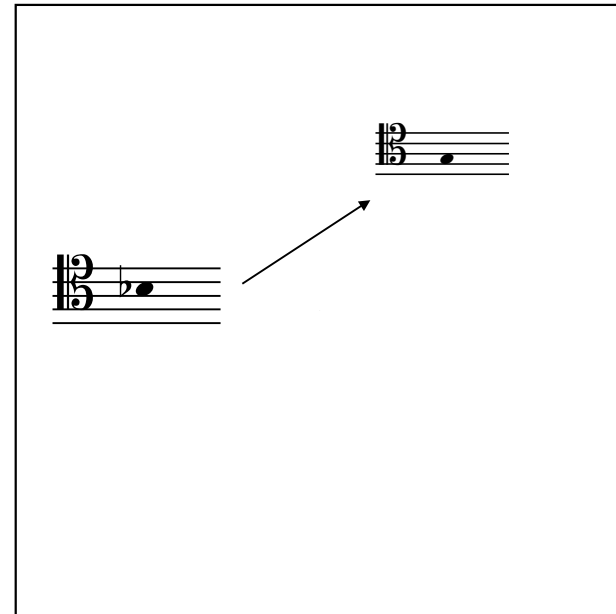
0:50



as softly
as possible

0:58

1:30



as softly
as possible

(the piece lasts approximately 1:30)

1/2 *ff* 1/2 *f* 1/2 *mf* 1/2 *mp* 1/2 *pp* 1/2 as softly as possible 1/2 just air (blow into mouthpiece)

omega

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oboe

The musical notation for the oboe part of 'omega' consists of eight measures. The first measure is a half note chord of G4 and Bb4, marked *<ff>*. The second measure is a half note chord of A4 and C#5, marked *<mf>*. The third measure is a half note chord of B4 and D5, marked *<mp>*. The fourth measure is a half note chord of C5, Eb5, and Fb5, marked *<f>*. The fifth measure is a half note chord of G5, marked *<p>*. The sixth measure is a half note chord of A5, marked *<as softly as possible>*. The seventh measure is a half note chord of B5, marked *<just air>*. The eighth measure is a whole note chord of C6, marked *<just air>*.

omega

Nikolaos-Laonikos Psimikakis-Chalkokondylis

b \flat clarinet

$\frac{1}{2}$

$\frac{1}{2}$

$\frac{1}{2}$

$\frac{1}{2}$

$\frac{1}{2}$

$\frac{1}{2}$

$\frac{1}{2}$

 $\frac{1}{2}$

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 $\frac{1}{2}$

 $\frac{1}{2}$


 $\frac{1}{2}$

 $\frac{1}{2}$

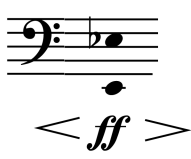
omega

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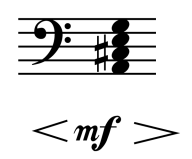
bassoon




$\frac{1}{2}$



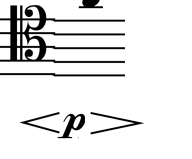
$\frac{1}{2}$



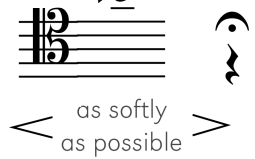
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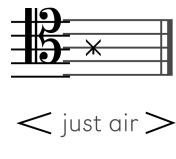
$\frac{1}{2}$



$\frac{1}{2}$



$\frac{1}{2}$



$\frac{1}{2}$

parathyra

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♩=72 *

Flute

Oboe

Bass Clarinet

Horn in F

Bassoon

Fl.

Ob.

B. Cl.

Hn.

Bsn.

pp

mf

f

pp

p

mp

p

mp

p

sfz

p

mp

p

sfz

p

sfz

sfz

p

sfz

mf

p

ppp

sfz

pp

mf

ff

mf

mp

p

sfz

p

pp

* time signatures and barlines do not imply pulsation or accents;
they serve merely as an aid to synchronize the performers.

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parathyra

25

Fl.

ppp *p* *mp* *ff* *mf* *pp* *sfz* *p*

Ob.

ppp *f* *f* *p*

B. Cl.

p *f* *pp* *mf* *p* *mf* *pp*

Hn.

mf *p*

Bsn.

sfz *p* *p* *sfz* *fffz*