

The Witness

from

Disappearances

duration ca. 7:00

music by Christopher Coleman
poem by Mary Ann Coleman

The Witness

Blood bruises my veins as I breathe
this difficult element,
A shell thin air curved around the world.
My dresser gives back the simple wood
surfacing gently from the dark.
Dogwoods roll and boil
in a generous breeze my open window captures.
I turn to you, clothed in my smooth skin,
and feel my breathing tighten;
witness your face that will last in a pattern
meshed in my brain when this furniture has fallen
toward ruin.

-- Mary Ann Coleman

Program note

The Witness is the central movement of a five song cycle based on poetry by my mother, Mary Ann Coleman. The poetry is all intensely personal. The outer songs, *Thoughts in a Jewelry Store* and *Descent*, are about family and heritage; the second and fourth, *After Seeing Lucia di Lammermoor* and *Focal Point*, concern my grandmother's mental illness, and, in the context of the other songs, provide a sense of foreboding for my mother and I. But this central song is a simple love poem from my mother to my father and it provides an oasis of calm in the midst of the surrounding trauma.

Instrumentation:

Mezzo-soprano

Bb Clarinet

Violin

Cello

Piano*

Percussion (1 player): bass drum, marimba, vibraphone**, 3 suspended cymbals**, tam-tam**, chime (D), water chime (F)***

Performance notes

* If possible, the piano is to be muted as noted in the score. The mute should be a windshield wiper ("squeegee") with a 14 inch rubber blade and a metal handle (as can be purchased at most hardware stores). The mute is to be placed on the strings as closely as possible to the keyboard. The page turner should be responsible for placing and removing the mute where indicated in the score, and from m. 67-75 the page turner should press down on the mute, applying heavy pressure and creating a more significant muted effect than elsewhere.

** If *The Witness* is performed independently from the rest of the song cycle, it may be necessary to reduce the percussion, in which case the vibraphone part can be played on the marimba, and the three suspended cymbals and tam-tam played on only a single, large suspended cymbal.

*** The water chime effect is made by lowering the chime tube into a tub of water, thereby lowering the pitch.

The sizzle effect in m. 47 is created by holding the triangle beater vertically and loosely and striking the side of the edge of the cymbal so that beater and cymbal are perpendicular with one another; the beater will rattle against the cymbal. In m. 66, the beater should be held similarly and stuck against the middle of the cymbal; if held loosely it will rattle in a similar manner.

Score in C

The Witness

from Disappearances

Christopher Coleman
Poem by Mary Ann Coleman

Adagio, ma sempre rubato $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 66$

Mezzo-Soprano

Clarinet in B \flat

Violin

Cello

Piano

Marimba

Percussion

Molto espressivo, e con grande sentimento

con sord.

ppp

pp

Molto espressivo, e con grande sentimento

con sord.

pp

*Mute**

Bass drum
Hard mallets L.V. *sempre*

ppp

pp

* See performance instructions

The Witness

Mezzo

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Mrb.

Perc.

poco rit.

poco cresc. - dim.

pp

poco cresc. - dim.

poco cresc. - dim.

ppp senza sord.

poco rit.

(non cresc.)

ppp

This musical score page contains seven staves of music. The instruments listed from top to bottom are Mezzo, B♭ Cl., Vln., Vc., Pno., Mrb., and Perc. The Mezzo staff consists of single vertical dashes. The B♭ Cl. staff features a melodic line with dynamics 'pp' and 'ppp senza sord.'. The Vln. and Vc. staves also contain melodic lines with dynamics 'poco cresc.', 'dim.', and 'ppp senza sord.'. The Pno. and Mrb. staves consist of single vertical dashes. The Perc. staff shows a rhythmic pattern with dynamics 'non cresc.' and 'ppp'.

The Witness

Poco meno mosso $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 60$

Mezzo 14

B♭ Cl. 14

Vln. 14

Vc. 14

Pno. 14 Poco meno mosso $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 60$
Quietly rippling
pp *pp*
Ped. *una corda*

Mrb. 14

Perc. 14 (L.V. *sempre*) *PPP*

At this point both the sustain pedal and the *una corda* pedal are depressed. The notation for release of the sustain pedal is as usual, *. The notation for release of the *una corda* pedal is *tre corda*.

The Witness

Molto espressivo, e con grande sentimento **p**

Mezzo 18
B♭ Cl. 18
Vln. 18
Vc.
Pno. 18
Mrb.
Perc.

Blood _____ bruis - es _____

Always at an almost subliminal level of perception

18

The Witness

Mezzo

22 my _____ veins _____ as _____ I _____ breathe _____

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

22

Mrb.

Perc.

* Ped.

The Witness

Mezzo

26

This _____ dif - fi - cult _____ e - - - - le - - - -

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Mrb.

Perc.

mp

The Witness

Mezzo

30

B♭ Cl.

30

Vln.

30

Vc.

Pno.

30

Mrb.

30

Perc.

ment,

*

The Witness

Mezzo

pp (*sotto voce*)

a _____ shell _____ thin _____ air _____ curved.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Throbbing
flautando

Vc.

come sopra

Pno.

Mute off

p

Ped. * *Ped.* * *Ped.* * *Ped.* * *Ped.* *

Mrb.

Perc.

med. sus. cym.;
soft mallet

This musical score page is numbered 8 at the top left. The title "The Witness" is centered at the top right. The score consists of eight staves, each with a different instrument name to its left. The instruments are: Mezzo, B♭ Cl., Vln., Vc., Pno., Mrb., and Perc. The Pno. staff is grouped with a brace and contains six measures of music. The Mrb. and Perc. staves are also grouped with braces and contain two measures each. The Mezzo, B♭ Cl., Vln., Vc., and the remaining part of the Pno. staff are ungrouped. Various musical markings are present: dynamic markings such as *pp* (pianissimo) and *p* (pianissimo); performance instructions like "Throbbing *flautando*" and "*come sopra*"; and pedal markings like "*Ped.*". The piano part includes sustained notes with dynamic changes and pedal markings. The percussion part includes sustained notes and soft mallet strikes. The vocal parts have lyrics: "a _____ shell _____ thin _____ air _____ curved.". The overall style is a formal musical score with clear instrumentation and detailed performance directions.

The Witness

Like a series of cresting waves

Mezzo 37

B♭ Cl. 37

Vln. 37

Vc. 37

Pno. 37

Mrb. 37

Perc. 37

a round the world.

pp

flautando

gradually move to

normale

pizz. *pp*
(*pizz. L. V. sempre*)

normale

arco

non accentato

Ped.

** Ped.*

tre corde

Ped.

p

p

The Witness

42 *accel.poco a poco* - - - - -

Mezzo

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Mrb.

Perc.

flautando

gradually move to

normale

accel.poco a poco

sf

14

*

p

ped.

small sus. cym.; tri beater on dome >

This musical score page contains six staves of music for an orchestra and piano. The instruments listed are Mezzo, B♭ Cl., Vln., Vc., Pno., Mrb., and Perc. The piano part is bracketed under 'Pno.' and includes dynamics like *sf*, *p*, and *ped.*. The percussion part includes instructions for 'small sus. cym.; tri beater on dome'. Various performance markings such as *accel.poco a poco*, *flautando*, and *normale* are present. Measure numbers 42 are indicated above most staves. A dynamic marking of *p* is placed over several measures of violin and cello music. Measure 14 is marked with a bracket under the piano staff. The score concludes with a final instruction for the percussionist.

The Witness

11

Mezzo

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Mrb.

Perc.

47

47

47

47

47

47

47

47

47

47

47

47

47

47

47

mp

flautando gradually move to *normale*

mp

sf

sf

*

mp

Ped.

large sus. cym.;
tri beater sizzle* *sf*
on edge

small sus. cym.;
tri beater on edge

* see performance notes

The Witness

Mezzo

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Mrb.

Perc.

52

52

52

52

52

52

52

sf

mf

mf

sf *sf* *sf* *

sf *sf* * *mf* Ped.

sf

mf

14

10

The musical score page shows measures 52 through 56. The title "The Witness" is centered at the top. The score includes parts for Mezzo, B♭ Cl., Vln., Vc., Pno., Mrb., and Perc. The piano part has two staves; the lower staff is grouped under "Pno." with a brace. Measure 52 starts with sustained notes from the strings and woodwind. Measures 53 and 54 show rhythmic patterns with grace notes and slurs. Measure 55 features eighth-note patterns in the piano and sustained notes in the bassoon. Measure 56 concludes with sustained notes and dynamic markings *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *, *sf*, and *mf* Ped. Measure numbers 14 and 10 are indicated near the piano staff. Measure 57 begins with a sustained note from the bassoon and a dynamic *mf*.

The Witness
A tempo $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 60$

Mezzo

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Mrb.

Perc.

56

molto rit.

Quietly rippling

pp

f

f

p

Quietly rippling

flautando

pp

molto rit.

A tempo $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 60$

p

f

*

una corda

mf

14

The Witness

Mezzo *semplice* **p**

B♭ Cl. **pp**

Vln.

Vc. **pp**

Pno. **p**

Mrb.

Perc.

My dress - er gives back the sim - ple wood

The Witness

15

Mezzo 63

B♭ Cl. 63

Vln. 63

Vc. 63

Pno. 63

Mrb. 63

Perc. 63

Sur - fac - ing _____ gent - ly _____ from _____ the

8 9 9 9 * Ped.

The Witness

Mezzo

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Mrb.

Perc.

66

dark.

pizz.

arco

normale

Mute on,
heavy pressure

Ped.
tre corde

large sus. cym.;
tri beater sizzle*

> at middle

66

mf

This musical score page contains six staves of music for an ensemble. The instruments listed from top to bottom are: Mezzo, B♭ Clarinet, Violin (Vln.), Cello (Vc.), Piano (Pno.), Marimba (Mrb.), and Percussion (Perc.). The tempo is marked as 66 throughout the page. The vocal part (Mezzo) has a single note on the first beat of each measure. The B♭ Clarinet part features eighth-note patterns with dynamics 'dark.' and 'mf'. The Violin part includes 'pizz.' (pizzicato) and 'arco' (bowing) markings. The Cello part has eighth-note patterns with dynamics 'f' and 'mf'. The Piano part shows sixteenth-note patterns with dynamics 'mf' and 'Ped. tre corde'. The Marimba part has eighth-note patterns with dynamics 'mf' and '7'. The Percussion part starts with a sustained note and dynamic 'mf', followed by eighth-note patterns with dynamics '7'. Measure numbers 14 and 66 are indicated above the staff lines. Performance instructions like 'large sus. cym.; tri beater sizzle*' and '> at middle' are also present.

The Witness

17

Mezzo 68

B♭ Cl. 68

Vln. 68

Vc. 68

Pno. 68

Mrb. 68

Perc. 68

Mezzo: Rest.

B♭ Cl.: 14

Vln.: Rest.

Vc.: Rest.

Pno.: *mp*

Mrb.: Rest.

Perc.: Rest.

Dog - - - woods

pizz. L.V.

pizz. > *mf* L.V.

mf

6

Ped.

This musical score page from 'The Witness' features seven staves of music. The instruments are Mezzo, B♭ Cl., Vln., Vc., Pno., Mrb., and Perc. The tempo is marked as 68 throughout. The vocal part (Mezzo) has a rest. The B♭ Clarinet part has a melodic line starting at measure 14. The Violin and Cello parts have rests. The Piano part has dynamics (mp) and performance instructions (pizz., L.V.). The Marimba and Percussion parts also have rests. The vocal part ends with dynamic markings (mf) and performance instructions (pizz. >, L.V., mf). The Marimba part ends with a dynamic (6) and a pedal marking (Ped.). Measure 14 is specifically labeled for the B♭ Clarinet.

The Witness

70
Mezzo roll — and boil — a gen - er -

70
B♭ Cl.

70
Vln.

Vc.

Pno.
Ped. * Ped. *

Mrb.
70

Perc.

f

The Witness

19

73

Mezzo -ous breeze my o - - pen win - dow cap -

73

B♭ Cl.

73

Vln.

Vc.

73

Pno.

73

Mrb.

73

Perc.

The musical score consists of seven staves. The top staff is for 'Mezzo' (mezzo-soprano) with lyrics: 'ous breeze my o - - pen win - dow cap -'. The second staff is for 'B♭ Cl.' (B-flat clarinet). The third staff is for 'Vln.' (Violin). The fourth staff is for 'Vc.' (Cello). The fifth staff is for 'Pno.' (Piano), with a dynamic marking 'Ped.' at the beginning of the second measure. The sixth staff is for 'Mrb.' (Marimba), with dynamic markings '7' under each note in the first two measures. The bottom staff is for 'Perc.' (Percussion). The score is numbered 73 throughout. There are also markings 'to Chime' and 'to Bass drum, Tam-tam' at the end of the piece.

The Witness

76
Mezzo

tures.

76
B♭ Cl.

p

76
Vln.
arco
mf

arco

Vc.

p

espressivo
mp

76
Pno.
mf
Mute off

p

Chime

Mrb.
mf

76
Bass drum
mf

Tam-tam pp

mf

pp

mf

Perc.

This musical score page contains six staves of music for an orchestra and percussion. The instruments listed are Mezzo, B♭ Cl., Vln., Vc., Pno., Mrb., and Perc. The score is numbered 76 at the top left. The vocal part (Mezzo) has a single staff with two notes. The B♭ Clarinet and Violin parts have melodic lines with dynamics p, mf, and mp. The Cello part has a harmonic line with dynamic p. The Piano part (two staves) starts with mf and 'Mute off', followed by mp and p. The Marimba part has a rhythmic pattern with dynamic mf. The Percussion part includes a Bass drum (mf), Tam-tam (pp), and a section labeled 'Chime' with a dynamic mp. Measure 76 ends with a fermata over the piano's first staff. Measure 77 begins with a sustained note from the piano's second staff. Measure 78 starts with a sustained note from the marimba. Measure 79 begins with a sustained note from the piano's second staff. Measure 80 concludes with a sustained note from the marimba.

The Witness

21

Musical score for orchestra and piano, page 21, system 82. The score includes parts for Mezzo, B♭ Cl., Vln., Vc., Pno., Mrb., and Perc.

The score consists of seven staves. The first staff (Mezzo) has a single note on the first system. The second staff (B♭ Cl.) starts with a sustained note followed by a melodic line with dynamic **p**. The third staff (Vln.) starts with a sustained note followed by a melodic line with dynamic **p**. The fourth staff (Vc.) starts with a sustained note followed by a melodic line with dynamic **p**. The fifth staff (Pno.) has a sustained note followed by a melodic line. The sixth staff (Mrb.) has a sustained note followed by a melodic line. The seventh staff (Perc.) has a sustained note followed by a melodic line. The score is in common time.

Mezzo

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Mrb.

Perc.

82

espressivo

p

espressivo

p

to Marimba

82

82

82

The Witness

88

Mezzo

88

B♭ Cl.

88

Vln.

Vc.

88

Pno.

p

(ped dim--release, ped, release, ped, release while holding key down)

Ped. una corda

* Ped.

* Ped.

* Ped.

* Ped.

Mrb.

88

Perc.

This musical score page contains six staves of music. The top three staves are for the orchestra: Mezzo (soprano), B♭ Clarinet, and Violin. The bottom three staves are for the piano (Pno.) and its continuo (Mrb. and Perc.). The piano staff has a dynamic marking of *p*. The score is in common time, indicated by the '88' at the beginning of each staff. The vocal part (Mezzo) and B♭ Clarinet have rests throughout the measure. The Violin and Cello play eighth-note patterns. The piano part includes a dynamic marking of *pp* and a complex pedaling instruction: '(ped dim--release, ped, release, ped, release while holding key down)'. The piano's continuo parts (Marimba and Percussion) also have rests. The vocal part (Mezzo) has a dynamic marking of *pp*.

The Witness

Mezzo 93 *p*

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno. 93 *pp* *p*

Mrb. 93 *pp*

Perc.

I turn to you clothed in

The Witness

Mezzo 97 my smooth skin _____ and feel _____ my brea - thing tight - en; _____ wit - ness _____ your face _____

B♭ Cl. 97 *mf*

Vln. 97

Vc.

Pno. 97

Mrb. 97

Perc. 97

The musical score is divided into two systems by a vertical bar line. The first system spans measures 97 to approximately 105. It features vocal entries from the Mezzo and B♭ Clarinet, with lyrics: "my smooth skin _____ and feel _____ my brea - thing tight - en; _____ wit - ness _____ your face _____". The B♭ Clarinet has a dynamic marking of *mf*. The second system begins with a forte dynamic (ff) for both the Piano (Pno.) and Marimba (Mrb.). The piano part continues with a series of eighth-note chords, while the marimba part features sustained notes with grace notes. The vocal parts continue in the second system, with the violin (Vln.) and cello (Vc.) providing harmonic support. The percussion (Perc.) staff shows sustained notes throughout both systems.

The Witness

25

Musical score for "The Witness" featuring six staves:

- Mezzo:** Vocal part with lyrics: "that will last _____ in _____ a pat - tern _____ meshed _____ in _____ my".
- B \flat Cl.:** B-flat clarinet part.
- Vln.:** Violin part.
- Vc.:** Cello part.
- Pno.:** Piano part, marked *flautando*. Includes pedal markings: * Ped., * Ped., * Ped., * Ped., *.
- Mrb.:** Marimba part.
- Perc.:** Percussion part.

Dynamics and performance instructions include *flautando* for the Violin, and pedal markings (* Ped.) for the Piano.

The Witness

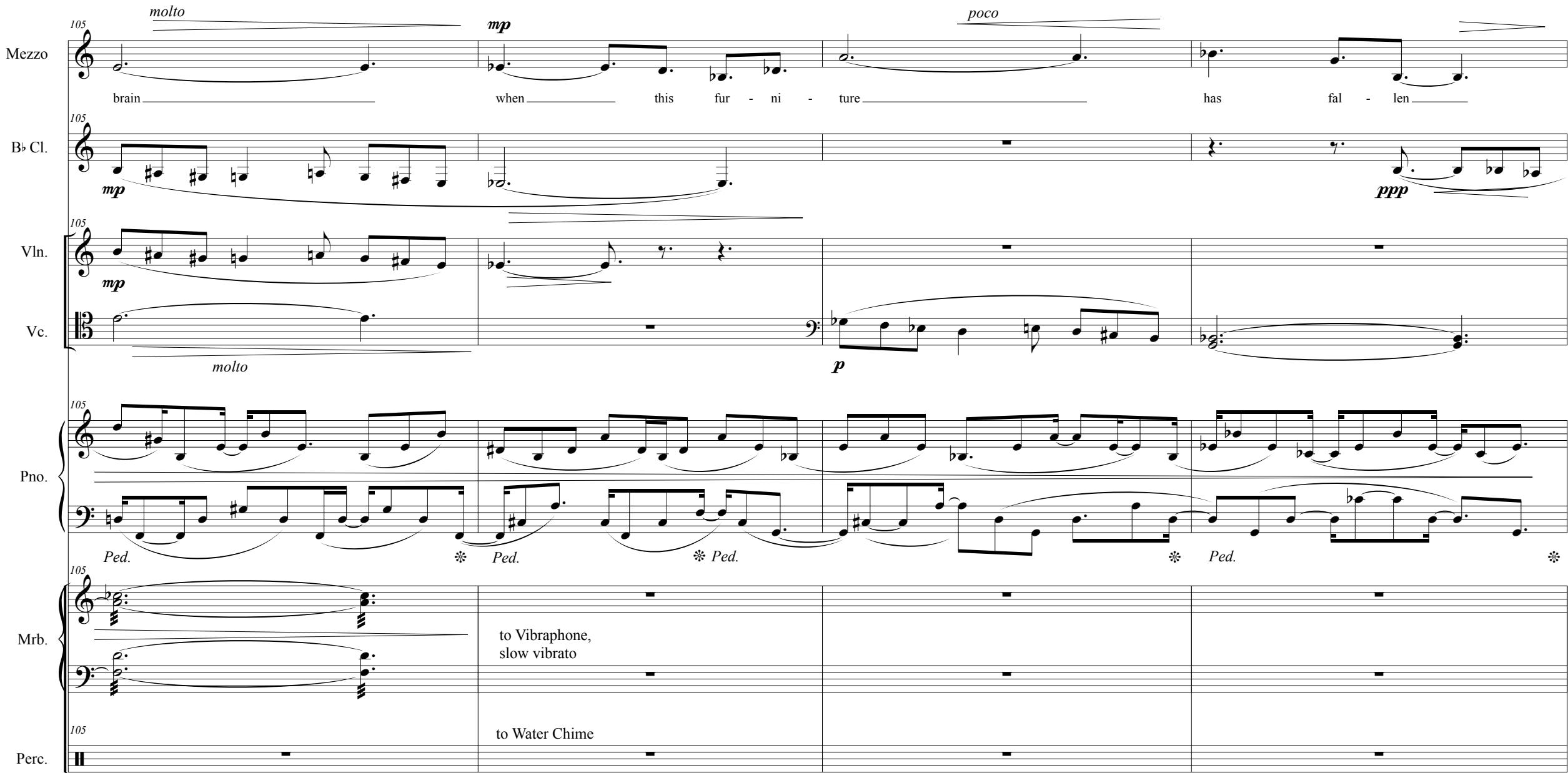
105 *molto* Mezzo
brain when this fur - ni - ture has fal - len

105 *mp* B♭ Cl.
mp Vln.
mp Vc.

105 Pno.
Ped. * *Ped.* * *Ped.* * *Ped.* *

105 Mrb.
to Vibraphone,
slow vibrato

105 Perc.
to Water Chime



The Witness

27

109 **p** **pp**

Mezzo toward — ru - in. —

109 **p** **pp**

B♭ Cl.

Vln. *normale* *espressivo, ma lontano* *poco*

Vc. Throbbing *come sopra*

Pno. *crystalline* **pp** rit.e dim al fine

Mrb. Ped.

Perc. L.V. **p** Ped. L.V.

The musical score consists of seven staves. The vocal part (Mezzo) has lyrics "toward — ruin." with dynamic markings **p** and **pp**. The B♭ Clarinet staff has dynamic markings **p** and **pp**. The Violin (Vln.) staff has dynamics *normale*, *espressivo, ma lontano*, and *poco*. The Cello (Vc.) staff has the instruction "Throbbing" and *come sopra*. The Piano (Pno.) staff has dynamics *crystalline* and **pp**, followed by "rit.e dim al fine". The Marimba (Mrb.) staff has the instruction "Ped.". The Percussion (Perc.) staff has dynamics **p** and *L.V.* markings. The score is numbered 109 at the beginning of each staff.

The Witness

Musical score for orchestra and piano, page 28, titled "The Witness". The score includes parts for Mezzo, B♭ Cl., Vln., Vc., Pno., Mrb., and Perc. The tempo is marked "115" throughout most of the page. Various dynamics and performance instructions are present, such as "molto rit.", "lunga", "ppp", "Ped.", and "lunga". The piano part features a dynamic marking "ppp" with "lunga" and "molto rit." instructions.

Mezzo
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Pno.
Mrb.
Perc.

115
115
115
115
115
115
115

molto rit.
lunga
ppp lunga
ppp
ppp lunga
molto rit.
ppp lunga
Ped.
lunga
ppp
Ped.
ppp
*