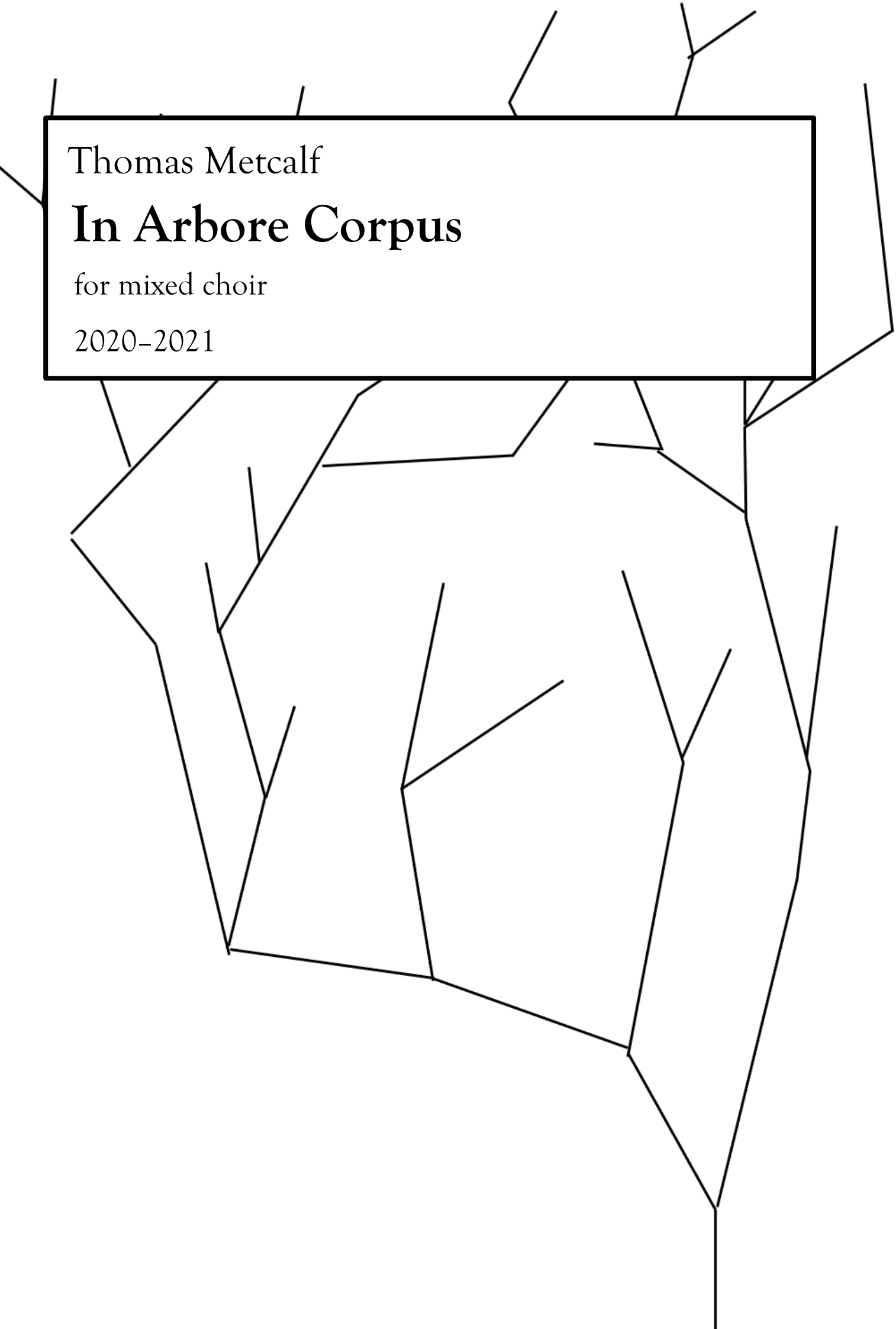
Thomas Metcalf

In Arbore Corpus

for mixed choir

2020–2021



Composer's Note

In Arbore Corpus sets one of the myths from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which depicts the transformation of Phaeton's sisters into trees, using an excerpt from original Latin as well as an English translation by Joseph Addison from 1717.

The piece utilises arborescences, or tree–like shapes, as a musical generator in order to render this myth metaphorically in the music: graphical insertions denote a more out-of-control, free, character to the music, alongside calmer passages derived from graphing an arborescence in a pitch–time space (i.e. section II). Convergence and divergence are overarching themes in the music throughout, similarly echoing evolutionary and natural traits in the subject matter.

Performance Directions

The minimum number of singers is 18: soprano and baritone soloists with SSAATTBB choir (at least two singers per voice part).

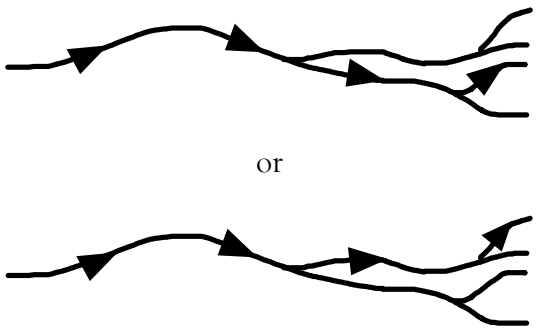
Baritone Solo

Cross noteheads indicate narration. This should be in a dramatic style, using natural speech inflections. Changes of position on the stave indicate a general inflection higher or lower.

Choir

Where there are graphics inserted into the score, the performers are instructed to perform a glissando, starting on the indicated pitch, that matches the contour of the shape. Where there is a divergence in the path, the performer should make a choice as to which should be followed. Once the end of the path is reached, they should stop singing.

e.g.



or

Do not articulate small, bracketed notes in glissandi.

International Phonetic Alphabet Characters

ʃ	as in **sh**e	m	as in **m**other
ʒ	as in vi**s**ion	n	as in **n**ut
ɑ	as in h**a**rd	eɪ	as in f**a**ce

–

This piece was awarded 2nd prize in Kazakhstan University of the Arts' 'New Music Generation 2021'.

Duration: c. 6'

–

[non satis est:] ... 'parce, precor, mater,' ...
'parce, precor: nostrum laceratur in arbore corpus

Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 8 AD

–

She tears the bark that to each body cleaves,
And from their verdant fingers strips the leaves:
The blood came trickling, where she tore away
The leaves and bark: the maids were heard to say,
"Forbear, mistaken parent, oh! Forbear;
A wounded daughter in each tree you tear;
Farewell for ever." Here the bark encreas'd,
Clos'd on their faces, and their words suppress'd.

The new–made trees in tears of amber run,
Which, harden'd into value by the sun,
Distill for ever on the streams below:
The limpid streams their radiant treasure show,
Mixt in the sand; whence the rich drops convey'd
Shine in the dress of the bright Latian maid.

Ovid, *Metamorphoses*
Translated by Joseph Addison, 1717

In Arbore Corpus

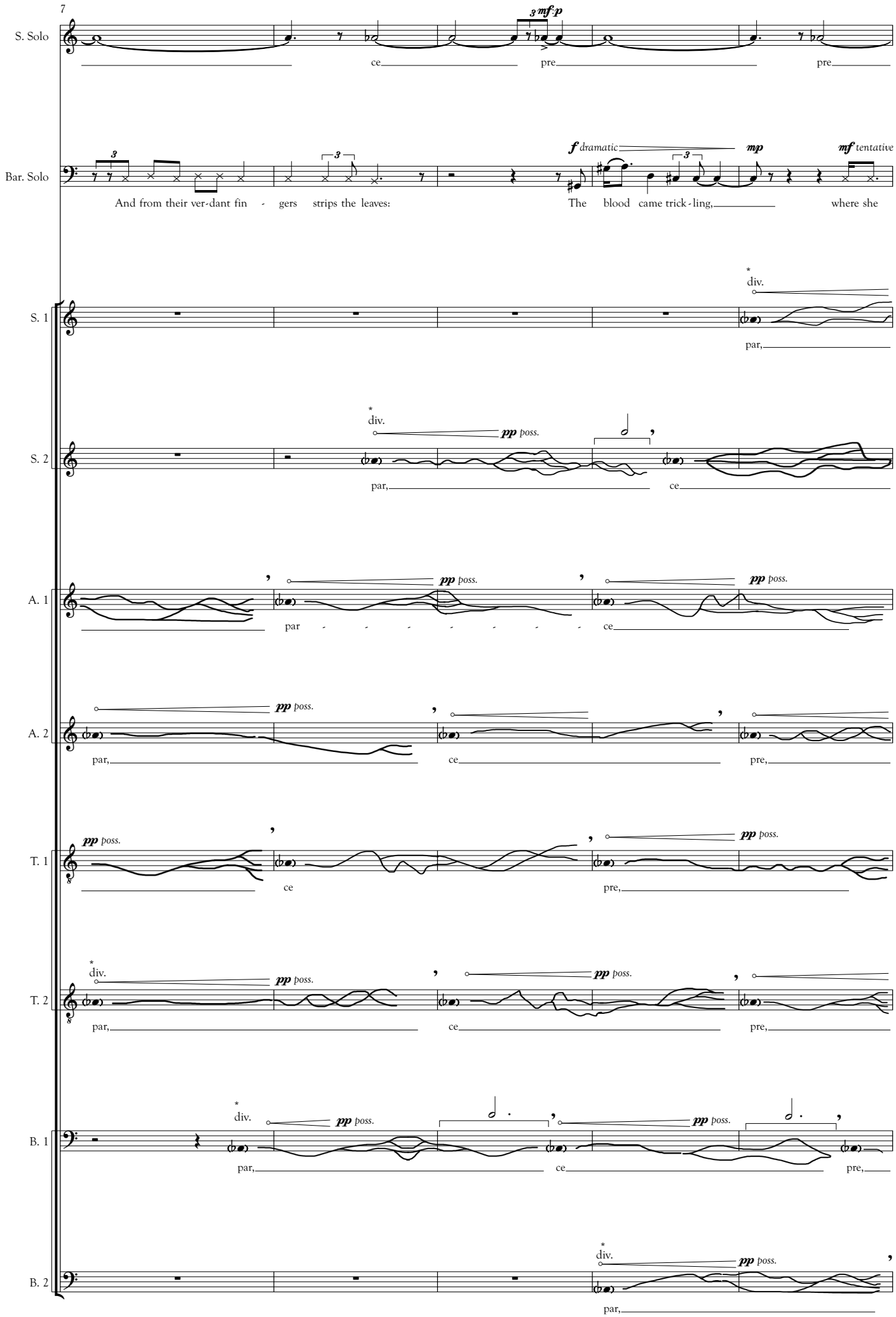
Ovid (43 BC - c. 17AD)
tr. Joseph Addison (1672-1719)

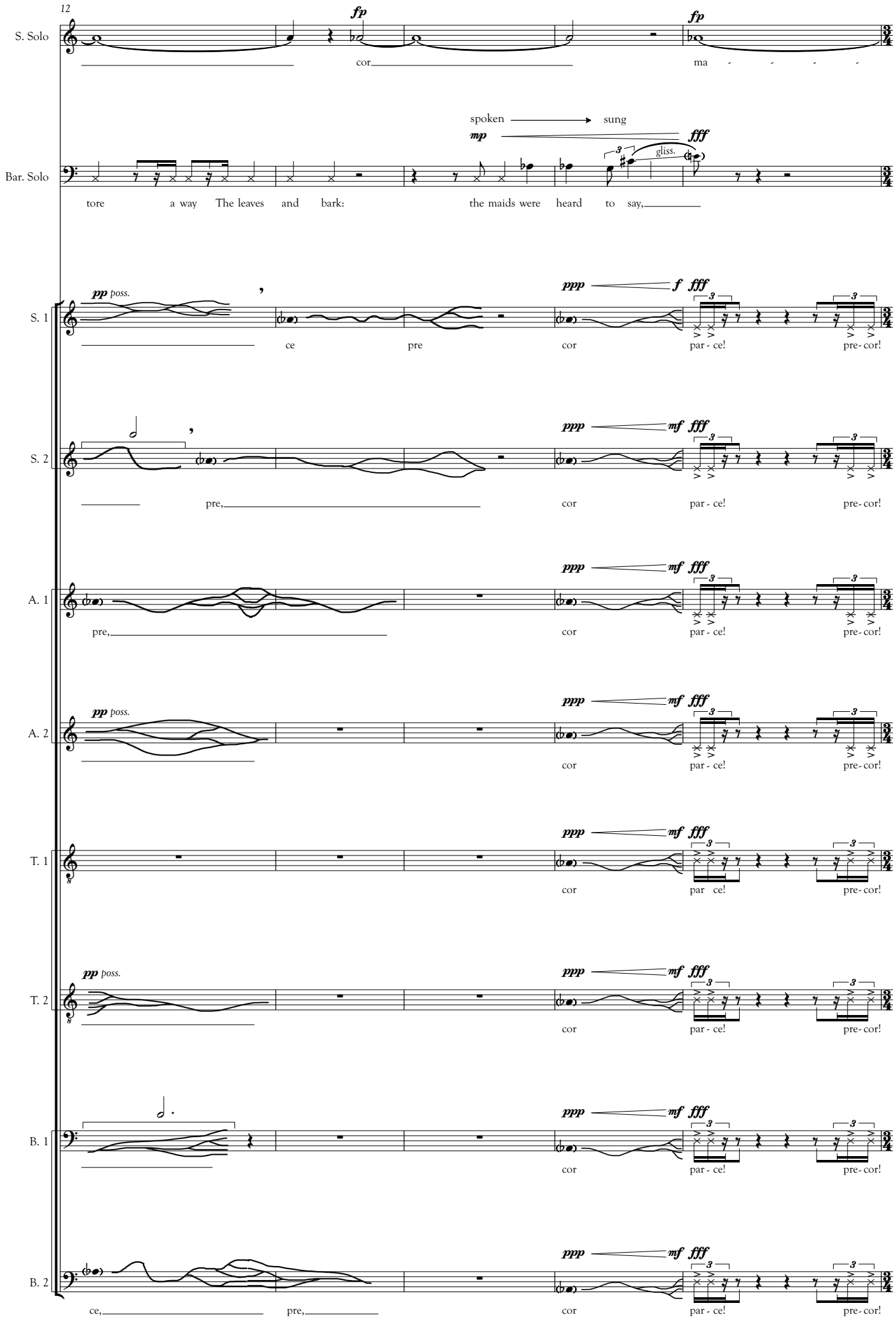
Thomas Metcalf (b. 1996)

I | Phaeton's Sisters are Turned into Trees



* imperceptible entry; see performance notes.


7
S. Solo
3 mf p
ce
pre
pre
Bar. Solo
f dramatic
mp
mf tentative
And from their ver-dant fin - gers strips the leaves:
The blood came trick-ling,
where she
S. 1
div.
par,
S. 2
div.
pp poss.
par,
ce
A. 1
pp poss.
pp poss.
par
ce
A. 2
pp poss.
par,
ce
pre,
T. 1
pp poss.
pp poss.
ce
pre,
T. 2
div.
pp poss.
pp poss.
par,
ce
pre,
B. 1
div.
pp poss.
pp poss.
par,
ce
pre,
B. 2
div.
pp poss.
par,


12
S. Solo
fp
cor
fp
ma
spoken
sung
mp
fff
Bar. Solo
gliss.
tore a way The leaves and bark: the maids were heard to say,
S. 1
pp poss.
ce
pre
ppp
f fff
cor
par - ce!
pre - cor!
S. 2
pre,
ppp
mf fff
cor
par - ce!
pre - cor!
A. 1
pre,
ppp
mf fff
cor
par - ce!
pre - cor!
A. 2
pp poss.
ppp
mf fff
cor
par - ce!
pre - cor!
T. 1
ppp
mf fff
cor
par ce!
pre - cor!
T. 2
pp poss.
ppp
mf fff
cor
par - ce!
pre - cor!
B. 1
ppp
mf fff
cor
par - ce!
pre - cor!
B. 2
ce,
pre,
ppp
mf fff
cor
par - ce!
pre - cor!

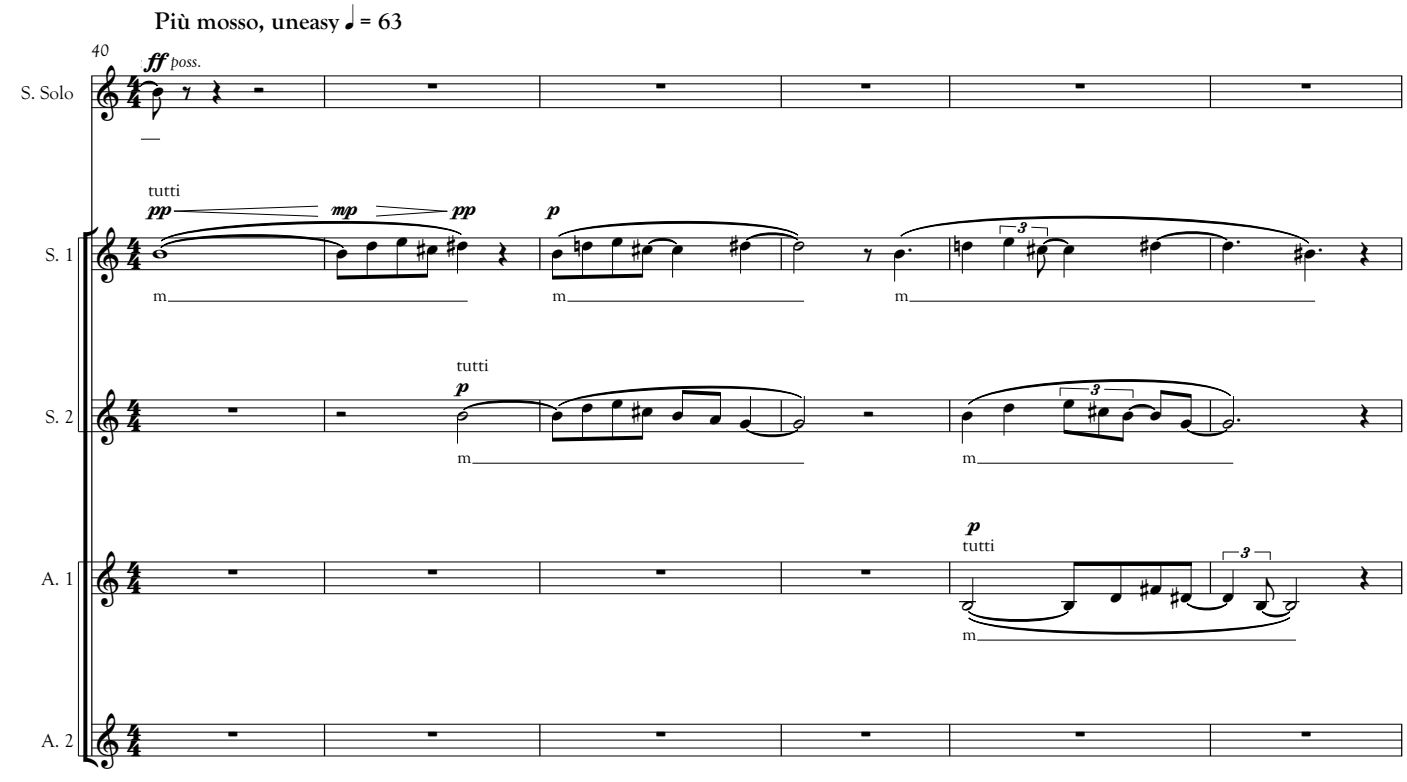

17
S. Solo
pp
ter
poco rubato
mp
mf
mp
non rubato
ff
Bar. Solo
A woun - ded daugh-ter in each tree you tear;
S. 1
pp
fff
ppp
mp
par-ce! par-ce! pre-cor! ma - ter! nos
S. 2
p
A. 1
A. 2
T. 1
mf
T. 2
B. 1
B. 2


23
vib. ord.
S. Solo
Bar. Solo
S. 1
S. 2
A. 1
A. 2
T. 1
T. 2
B. 1
B. 2
solo
ma - - ter!
ma - - - ter!
- trum
trum
la - ce - ra - tur
nos

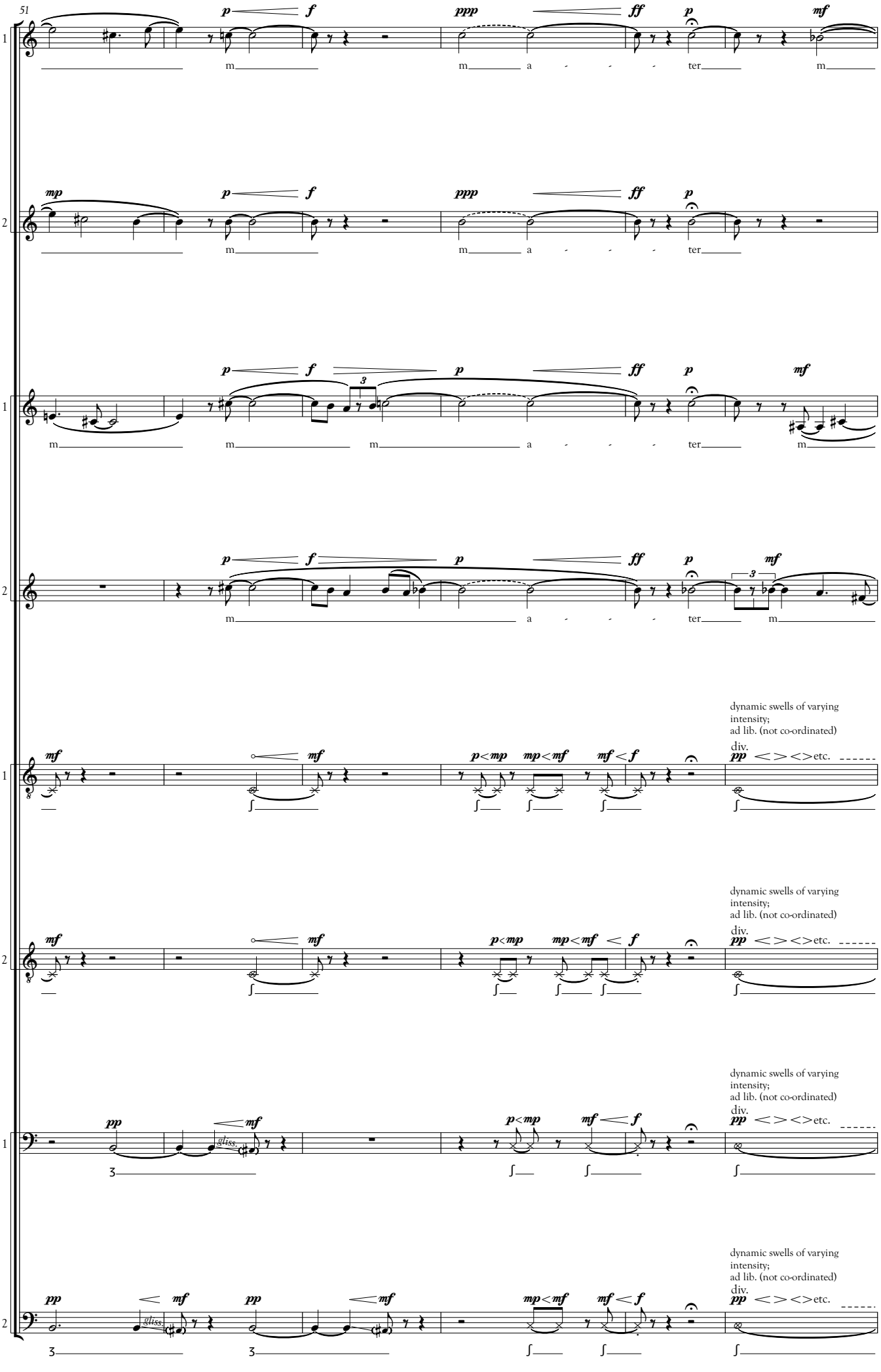

28
S. Solo
ma - - - - - ter. par - ce pre - -
Bar. Solo
S. 1
ma
S. 2
la - ce - ra - - - - - tur.
A. 1
la - ce - ra - - - - - tur.
A. 2
ma
T. 1
la - ce - ra - - - - - tur. Fare - well, fare - well,
T. 2
Fare - well, fare - well,
B. 1
la - ce - ra - - - - - tur. Fare - well, fare - well,
B. 2
la - ce - ra - - - - - tur. Fare - well, fare - well,

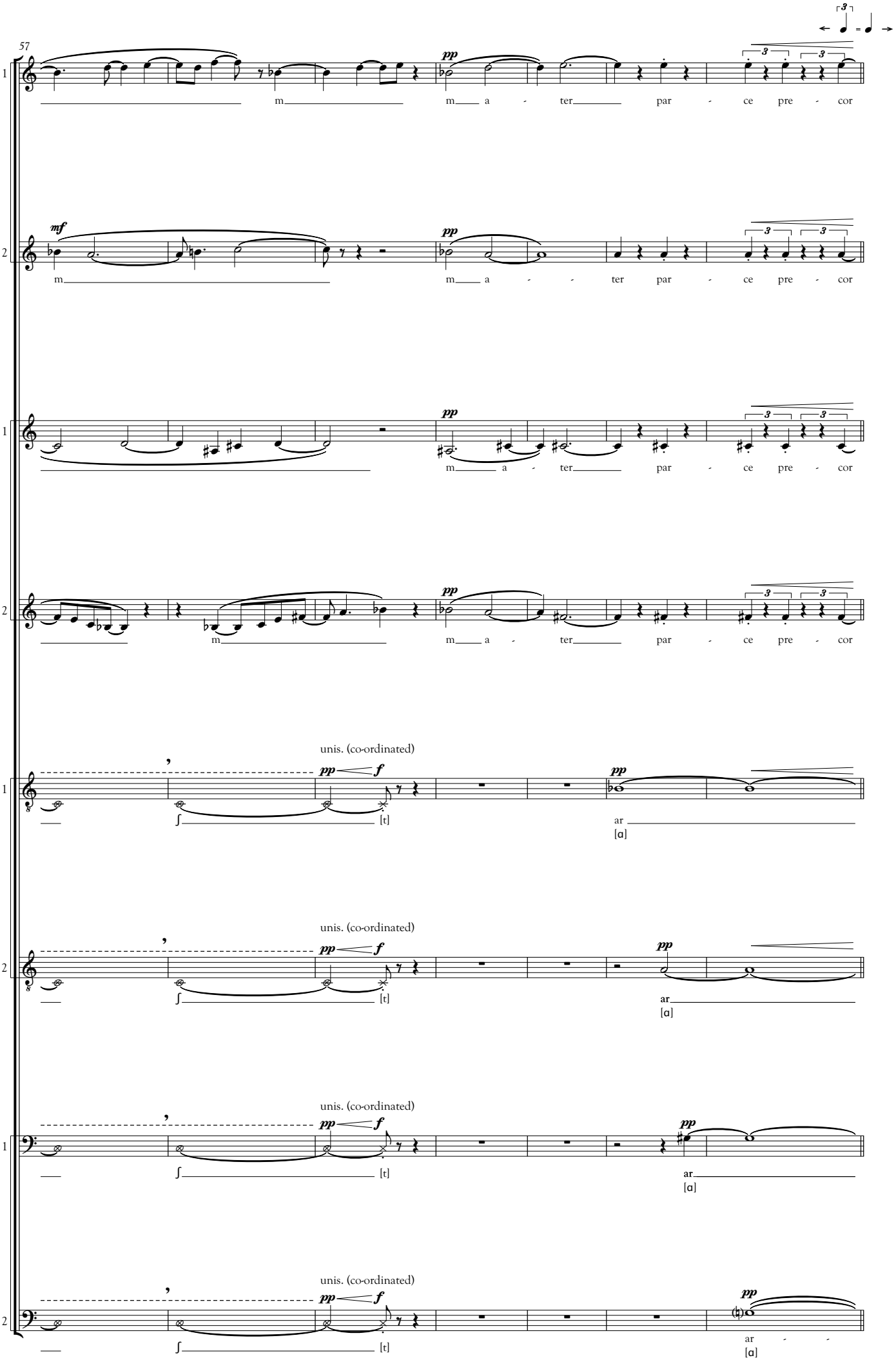


II | The Rooted Trees Sing Wordless Songs




46
S. Solo
S. 1
S. 2
A. 1
A. 2
T. 1
T. 2
B. 1
B. 2
mf
f
pp
mp
p
div.
unis.
tutti
gliss.
m
ma


51
S. 1
S. 2
A. 1
A. 2
T. 1
T. 2
B. 1
B. 2
m a ter
dynamic swells of varying intensity; ad lib. (not co-ordinated)
div.
etc.
gliss.


57
S. 1
S. 2
A. 1
A. 2
T. 1
T. 2
B. 1
B. 2
mf
pp
f
3
m a - ter par - ce pre - cor
unis. (co-ordinated)
[t]
ar
[a]

III | In Arbore Corpus

Più mosso ♩ = c. 95

64 slowly uncover mouth. → (uncovered)

Narrated; approximate rhythms

mp stoic

agitato

S. Solo

Bar. Solo

The new made trees in tears of am - ber run, Which, har-den'd in - to va-lue by the

S. 1

S. 2

A. 1

A. 2

T. 1

T. 2

B. 1

B. 2

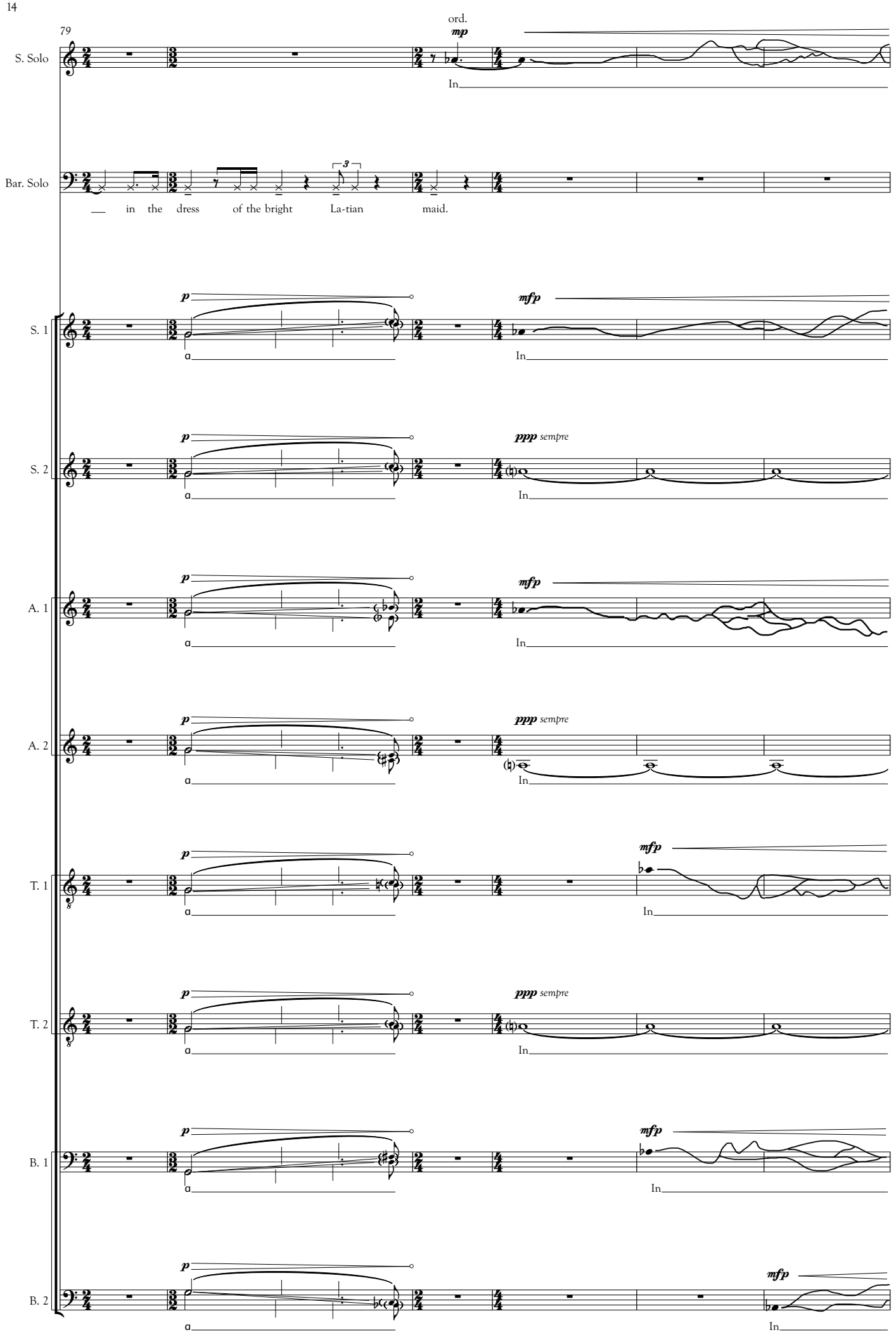
mp *p* *gliss.*

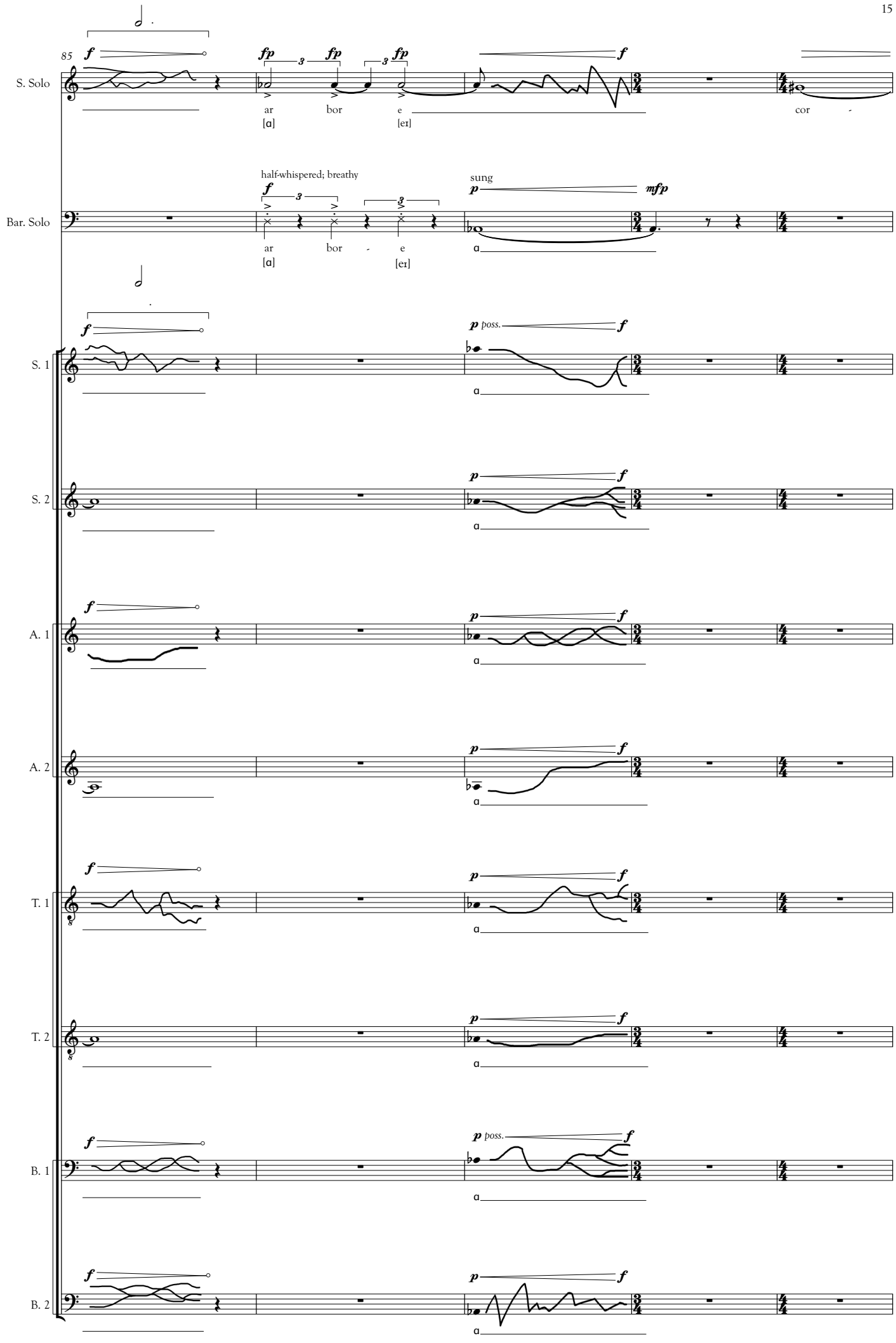
ar - - - - bor - - - - ae ar

[a] [eɪ]


69
S. Solo
Bar. Solo
ff
fff
mp sinister
sun, Dis - till for e - ver on streams be - low: The lim - pid streams their
S. 1
S. 2
A. 1
A. 2
T. 1
T. 2
B. 1
B. 2
ppp
ffp
gliss.
bor
ar
ae
in ar - bor - ae


74
S. Solo
Bar. Solo
ra - di-ant trea-sure show, Mixt in the sand; whence the rich drops con - vey'd Shine
S. 1
S. 2
A. 1
A. 2
T. 1
T. 2
B. 1
B. 2
div.
p sub.
unis.
ppp
div. al fine
mfp
gliss.
cor - - pus, in ar - - bor - ae cor - pus,


79
ord.
mp
S. Solo
In
Bar. Solo
3
— in the dress of the bright La-tian maid.
p
mfp
S. 1
a
In
p
ppp sempre
S. 2
a
In
p
mfp
A. 1
a
In
p
ppp sempre
A. 2
a
In
p
mfp
T. 1
a
In
p
ppp sempre
T. 2
a
In
p
mfp
B. 1
a
In
p
mfp
B. 2
a
In


85
S. Solo
ar bor e cor
[ɑ] [eɪ]
half-whispered; breathy
sung
Bar. Solo
ar bor e
[ɑ] [eɪ]
S. 1
S. 2
A. 1
A. 2
T. 1
T. 2
B. 1
B. 2
poss.

Repeat, changing the path taken each time. Vary speed. Uncoordinated.
Breathe as necessary.

c. 45"

a tempo [♩. = 63]

90

S. Solo
- pus. ma

Bar. Solo
in ar - bor - ae cor - pus,

S. 1
a

S. 2
bor

A. 1
er

A. 2
pa

T. 1
cor

T. 2
pus

B. 1
ter

B. 2
pre

fff dim. poco a poco (*ppp*)

mf *ffff*

In ar - bor - ae cor - pus!