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The Flowing River

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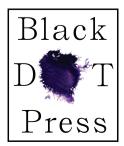
Conrad ASMAN

Flowing River 小河淌水·《Xiǎo hé tǎng shuǐ》 (2019)

for Solo Sheng, Erhu & Orchestra



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Conrad Asman

The Flowing River

for Solo Sheng, Erhu and Orchestra

Full Score



London • Cape Town • Johannesburg

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written and commissioned by the Shanghai Philharmonic and Conservatory Orchestra for the 2019 Listening to China Project

Duration c. 8'15"

World Premiere

December 2019; Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra with the Shanghai Conservatory of Music; Shanghai, People's Republic of China

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Composer's Notes

Instrumentation

for Solo Sheng, Erhu and Orchestra, comprising of:

3 Flutes (3rd Flute doubling on Piccolo) 3 Oboes 3 Clarinets in B-flat 2 Bassoons Contrabassoon

4 Horns in F 3 Trumpets in B-flat (All trumpets will need straight and whispa/practise mutes.) (1st Trumpet will need, in addition to above, a harmon mute.) 2 Trombones Bass Trombone Tuba

Timpani

Percussion (4 Players) 1: 3 Cymbals (Sizzle, Suspended and China Cymbals), Temple Blocks (5), Crotales (1 Octave), Triangle

2: Vibraphone, 3 Gongs (2 Opera Gongs (1 Large, 1 Small) and a Wind Gong (Feng) *or* Tam-tam), Hand Crash Cymbals, Tenor Drum (shared with Perc. 3)

3: Tenor Drum (shared with Perc. 2), Snare Drum, Tubular Bells

4: Tam-tam (Large), Bass Drum

Harp

Solo Sheng (may be subsituted for Solo Accordion)

Solo Erhu (may be substituted for Solo Violin/'Cello)

> Violins I Violins II Violas 'Cellos Double-basses

Minimum string count: (7-6-5-4-3)

Notation & Performance Notes

General

This score has been Transposed.

Throughout the piece, assume all time signatures modulate h = h, unless otherwise indicated.

All glissandi should be considered continuous (not done as *portamenti*, unless shown with *port*.)

All grace notes are to be played <u>before</u> the beat.

b## = alter pitch by regular semi-tone (i.e. flat/natural/sharp)

d = alter pitch by regular quarter-tone (quarter sharp/quarter flat)

 $b \ddagger a$ = alter pitch colouristically: sharpen or flatten in direction of arrow (no more than a quarter-tone)

Notation & Performance Notes

Trumpets

All Trumpets will need both a straight mute as well as a "whispa" or practise mute.

<u>NB</u>: If a practise mute is not available, play all passages marked *da lontano* at *ppp* level.

String division

Sections divide into subsections as well as desks and soloists. To clarify these divisions, the following notation is used:

A/B: inside/outside division 1/2/3: desk division (numbers indicate desk number) a/b: solo players at desk

i.e. 1a = solo (concertmaster); 3b etc.

Programme Note

The Chinese folksong 小河淌水 [pinyin: Xiǎo hé tǎng shuǐ English translation: flowing river/stream], rooted strongly in Yunnan culture, is a fine example of how one can express complex meanings of a written text through music. This became the grounding method upon which this composition of the same name was constructed: The Flowing River.

The legend of this folksong takes place near an unknown stream of water in the mountains near the Ancient Tea Horse Road. A beautiful maiden from a nearby village falls deeply in love with a travelling horseman. The night before he leaves for battle, they get engaged beside the river. Every night the maiden sings the song of the flowing river, in hopes for her words to be carried to her far away love. When the horseman return, the general tells the maiden that her love has had a change of heart and cannot face her, but instead offers a jade necklace to her as a token of guilt. The maiden refuses to remarry and continues to sing; hoping that her love will come back home. Yet, unbeknownst to her, the general did not have the strength to tell the maiden that her fiancée had died in the mountains and the necklace was meant as a gift to ask her hand in marriage.

This poignant and emotionally complex tale contains not only touching emotions, but an intriguing structure. In parallel to this, the composition follows a similar musical form, with the foreground material often being masked by a musical depiction of the flowing stream. The stream is the main focus of the textural element in this composition, with the programme depiction taking place in the background. The piece opens with a slow, colouristic depiction of the water, evoking a mystical, wonderous mood. This eventually transforms into more gushing textures and flowing melodies, with the emergence of our two lovers: the Maiden (musically represented by the Erhu) and the horseman (the Sheng). This becomes morphed into a rhythmically focused section, depicting both characters' joy of being in love, swelling to a climactic point of full euphoria. Suddenly, this is all halted when a distant Trumpet sound the call to battle, bidding the horseman farewell. The piece's mood turns cold and dark, and closes with the full folksong melody finally stated as a whole, placed in a sombre but still hopeful atmosphere. As the maiden continues to sing for her long-lost husband-to-be, **The Flowing River** slowly fades to completion.

written and commissioned for the Shanghai Philharmonic and Conservatory Orchestra for the 2019 Listening to China Project

The Flowing River

小河淌水 •《Xiǎo hé tǎng shuǐ》 for Solo Sheng, Erhu and Orchestra

Transposed Score

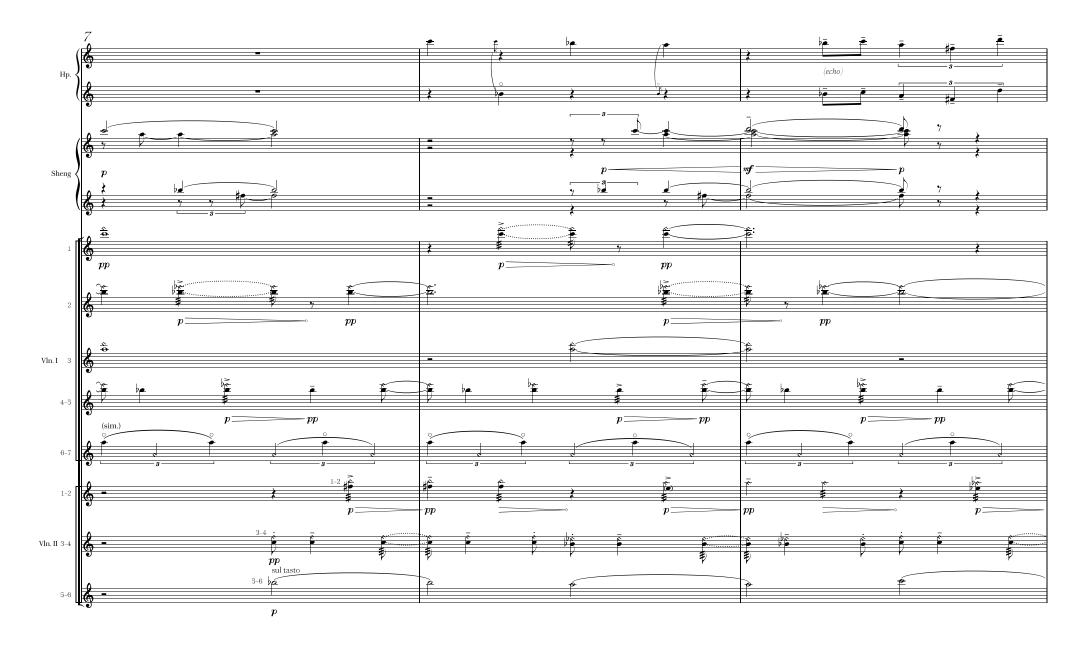
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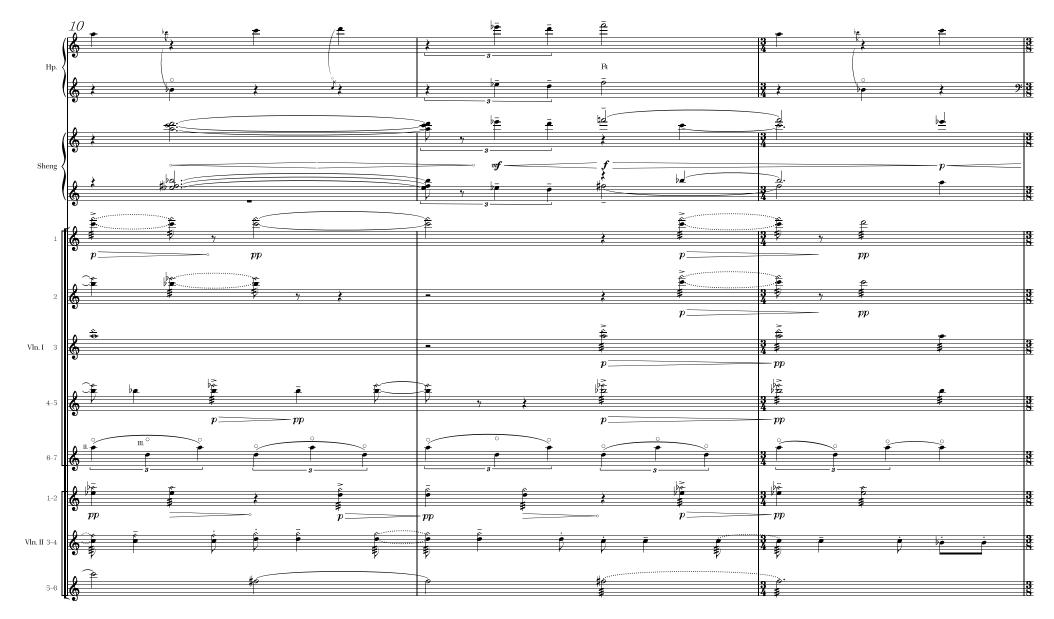


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The Flowing River \cdot Full score



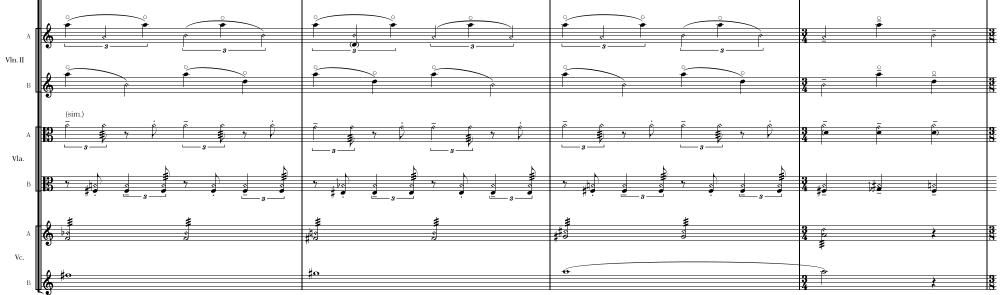




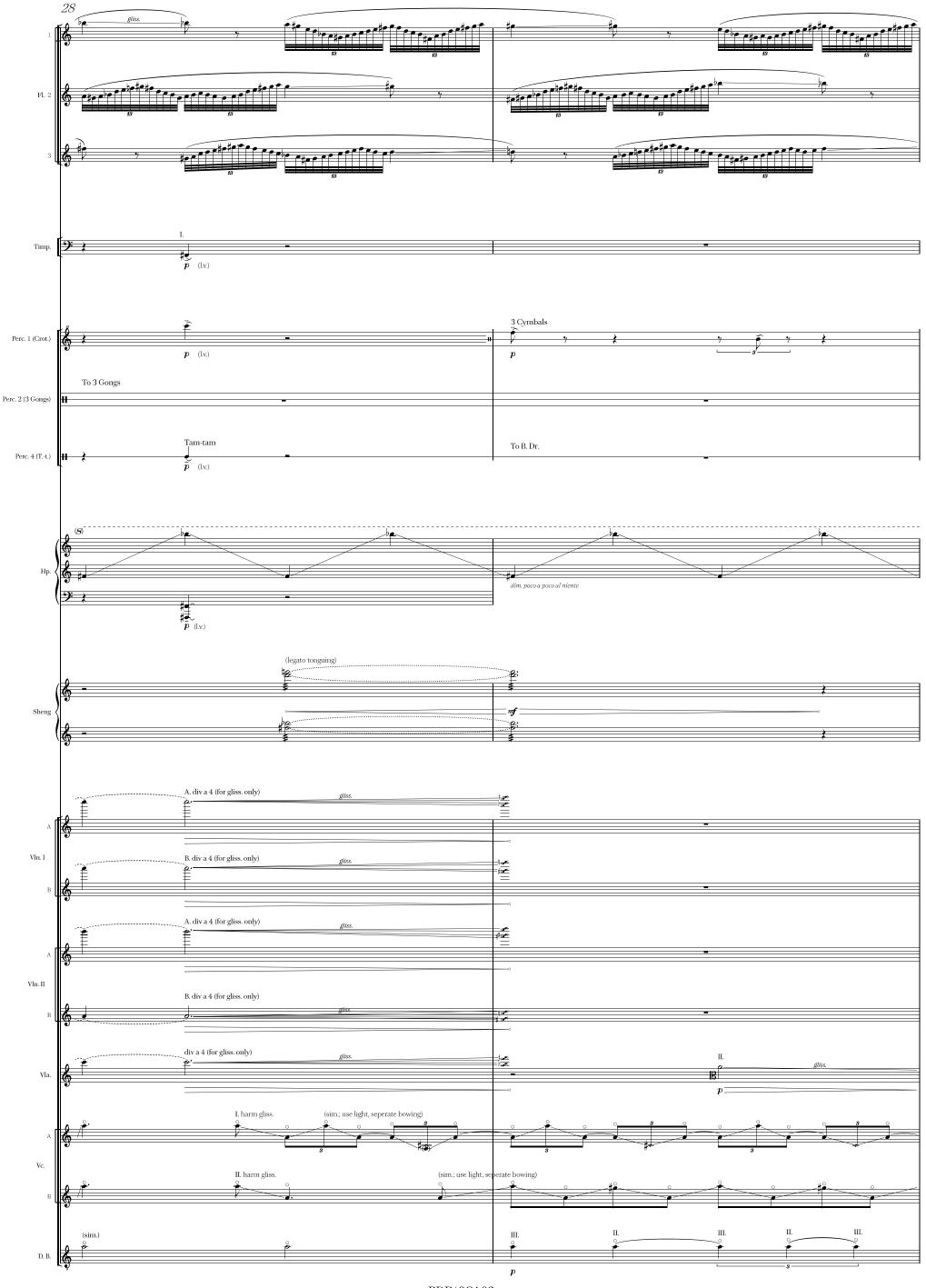


The Flowing River \cdot Full score

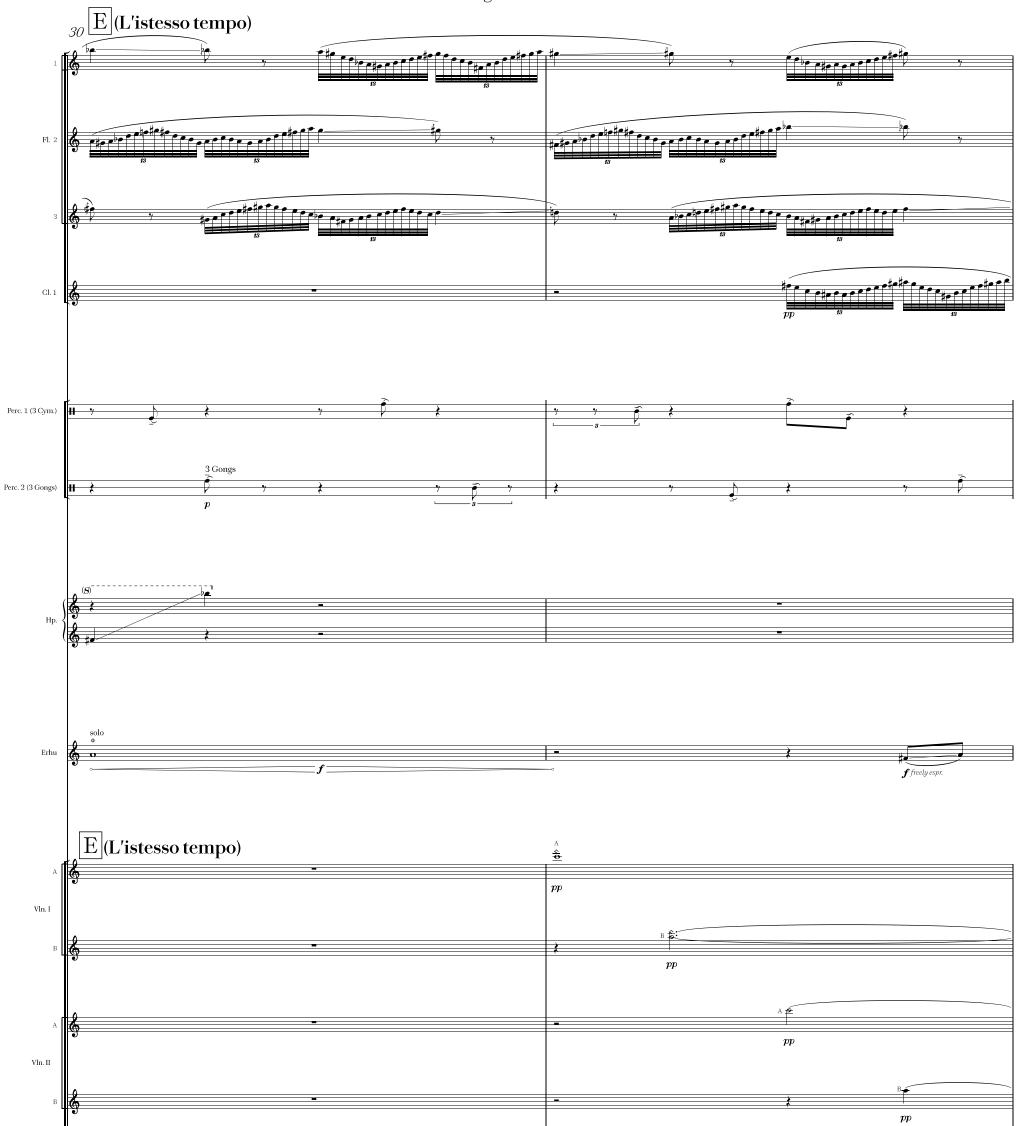


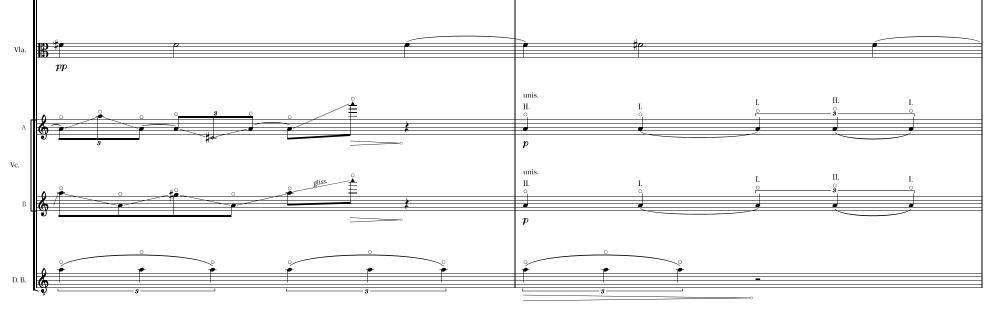


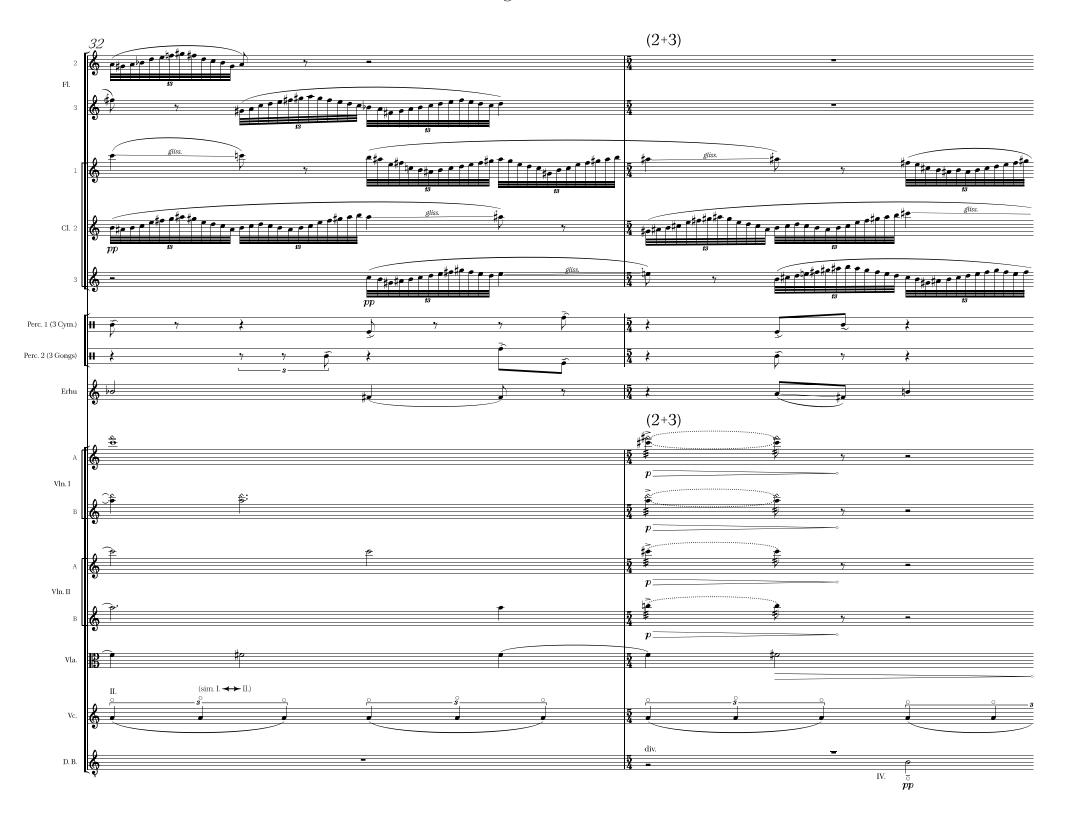




The Flowing River \cdot Full score





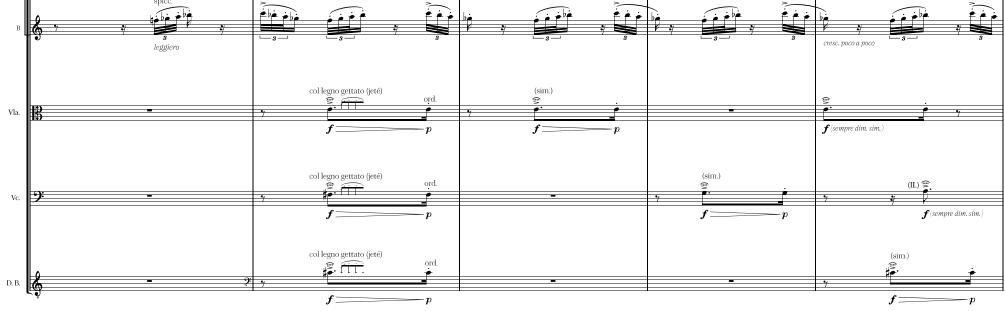




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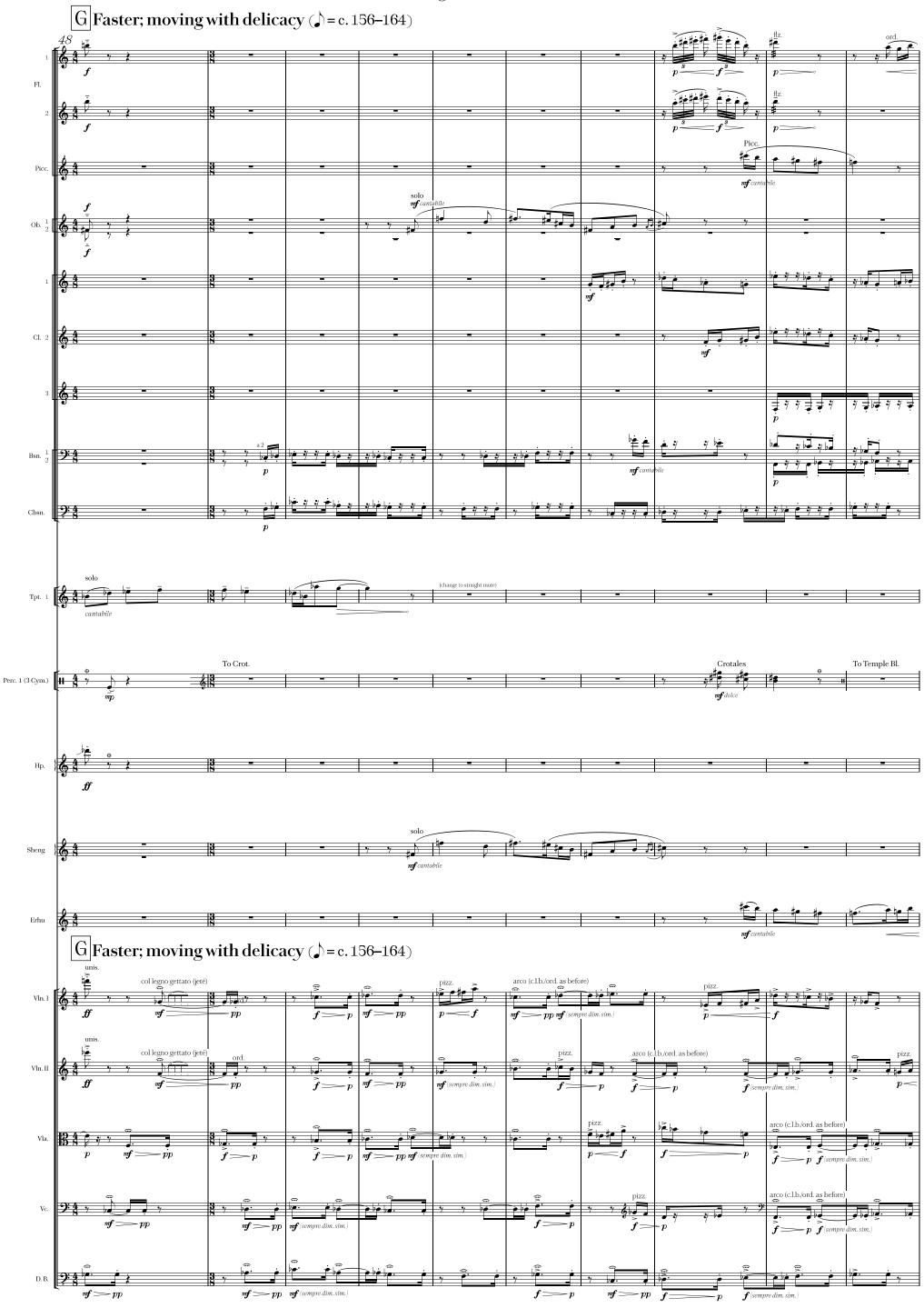




The Flowing River \cdot Full score









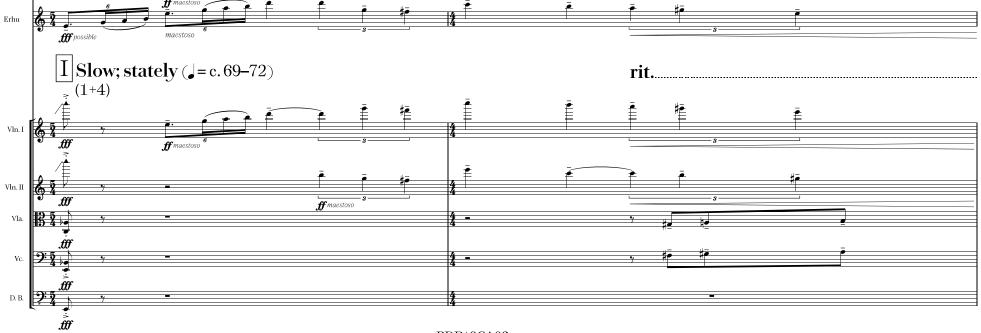


The Flowing River • Full score









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The Flowing River • Full score



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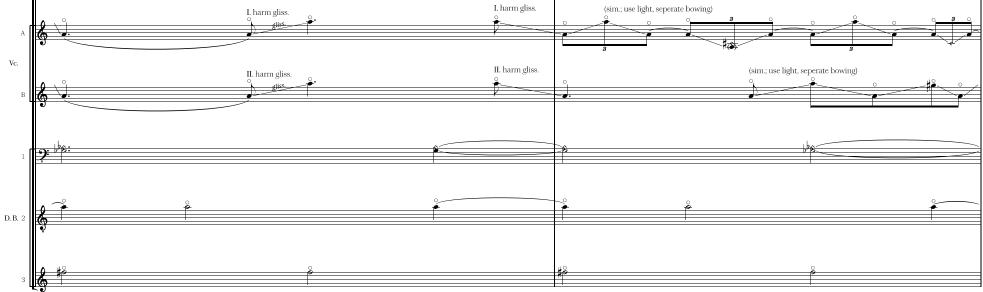
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