SACRED PHYSIC

A Dramatic Madrigal in 10 Scenes

For Soprano, Recorders, Oboe / Cor,
Harpsichord and Cello
Text edited and adapted from
"Pericles, Prince of Tyre" by William Shakespeare
Libretto and Music by Julia Usher

Performing Notes

The score is written in proportional notation. Where there are no time signatures, events within bars are flexible, and synchronised at catch up points, fermate, or dotted lines and arrows. Much of the time the instrumental parts depend on the voice part; and therefore every performer has a full score.

The extended phrases with long beams joining unequal notes involve proportionate spacing of the note values: quavers, quintuplets, triplets and minims retain a comparative value to each other, but flexibly interpreted to space elastically with the voice part.

The voice part is dramatic, and as this is almost a chamber opera, there should be theatrical contrast and a wide range of expression. At other times, there is a more reserved Baroque formality, when Marina is "performing" to her father.

The cello part represents Pericles himself, who does not, and cannot speak until the end of the scene- but whose alienated and distressed feelings are expressed.

Pericles

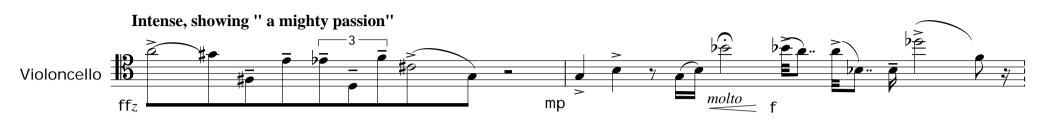
is one of Shakespeare's lesser known plays; I have loved it for many years, after seeing a moving performance at Stratford, with the actor Ian Richardson.

Music in the play has a very powerful effect on the characters. It brings Thaisa, Pericles wife, back into life -twice. It represents Marina's whole and upright character, which allows her to overcome many threats to her integrity. She has an harmonious influence on the people around her - who are mainly evil, weak or fallible. Musical training gives her insight into her father's condition, and allows her to bring him back to himself. These resurrections and restorations are echoed in many of Shakespeare's later plays; Like King Lear, Pericles comes to himself when music is played by a lost daughter.

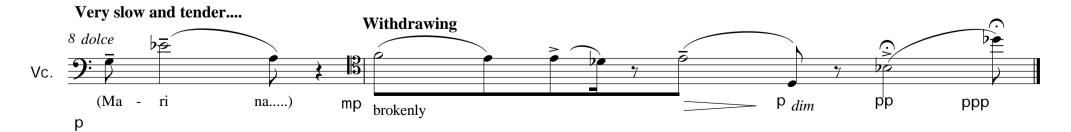
SCENARIO OF THE MADRIGAL.

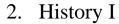
1. LAMENT	Pericles (represented by the Cello) gives voice to an outpouring a grief for the supposed death of his daugher, Marina.
2. HISTORY 1	Marina, unknown to him has come to the ship on which he has sought refuge in a deep despair. She describes his alienation.
3. LAMENT 2	Marina begins to tell the story of the unknown stranger who has been shipwrecked. She reflects on chance and Time, and how men are helpless against fate, and must endure all things.
4. ARIOSO	Marina summons musicians, and prepares to sing him out of his misery. Her 'sweetest harmony' will make a battery against his deafen'd ports, which now are midway stopp'd".
5. RECITATIVE	She pauses again in sudden empathy, and describes her "Sacred Physic', the artificial feat which will draw him into responding.
6. SALUTATION	She greets him formally - and there is a sudden recognition that he is her father.
7. ARIA CON OBBLIGATO	She begins a formal aria, which weaves a mysterious and imaginative story, like a
8. INTERMEZZO	riddle. Pericles' first disaster was the result of a dangerous riddle. She is dismayed; he does not respond; then he stirs violently, and she is afraid. But something whispers in her ear, 'Go not til he speaks'.
9. DRAMATIC QUARTET	Now Marina dares to tell the story of her own birth. She mentions her mother, Thaisa, who they both still believe is dead. Pericles begins to weep.
10. TRIO and CLOSE	A 'great sea of joys' rushes upon them . Pericles hears the music of the spheres.

Lament 1



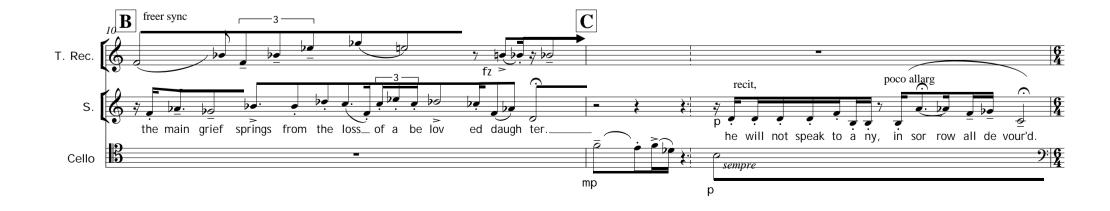


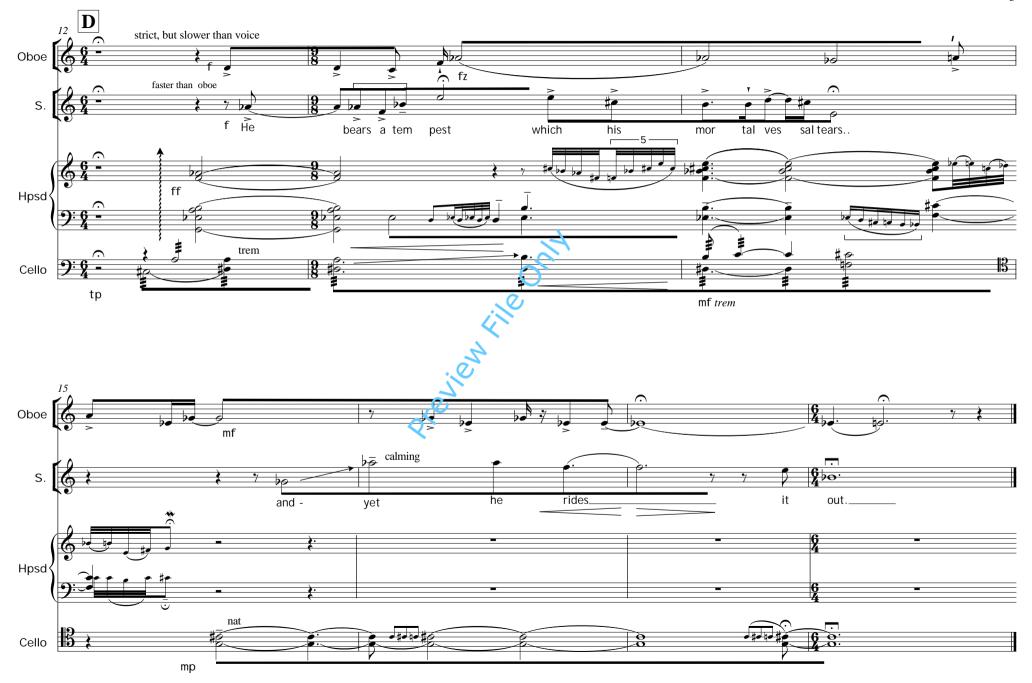








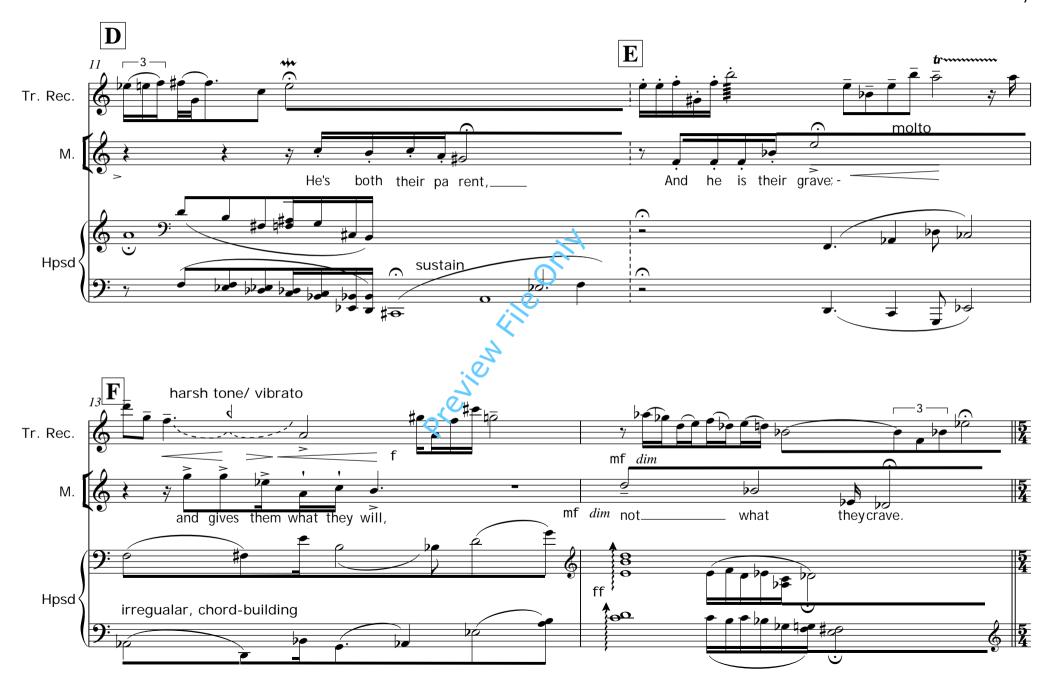




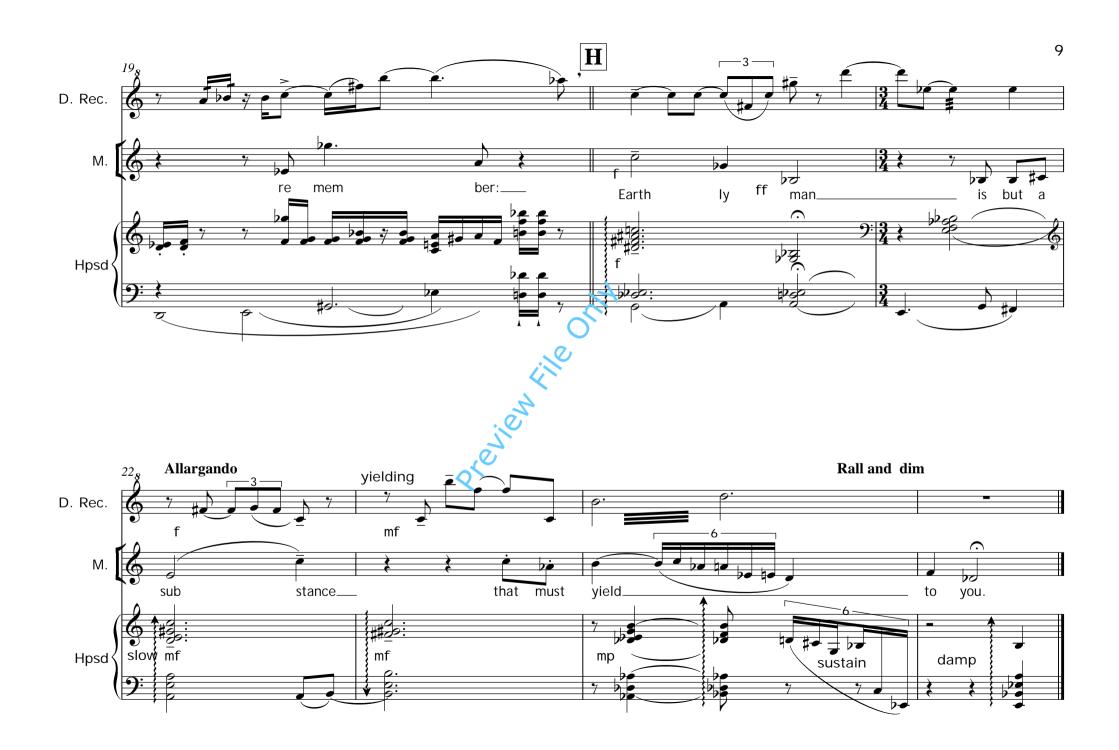
3. Lament 2





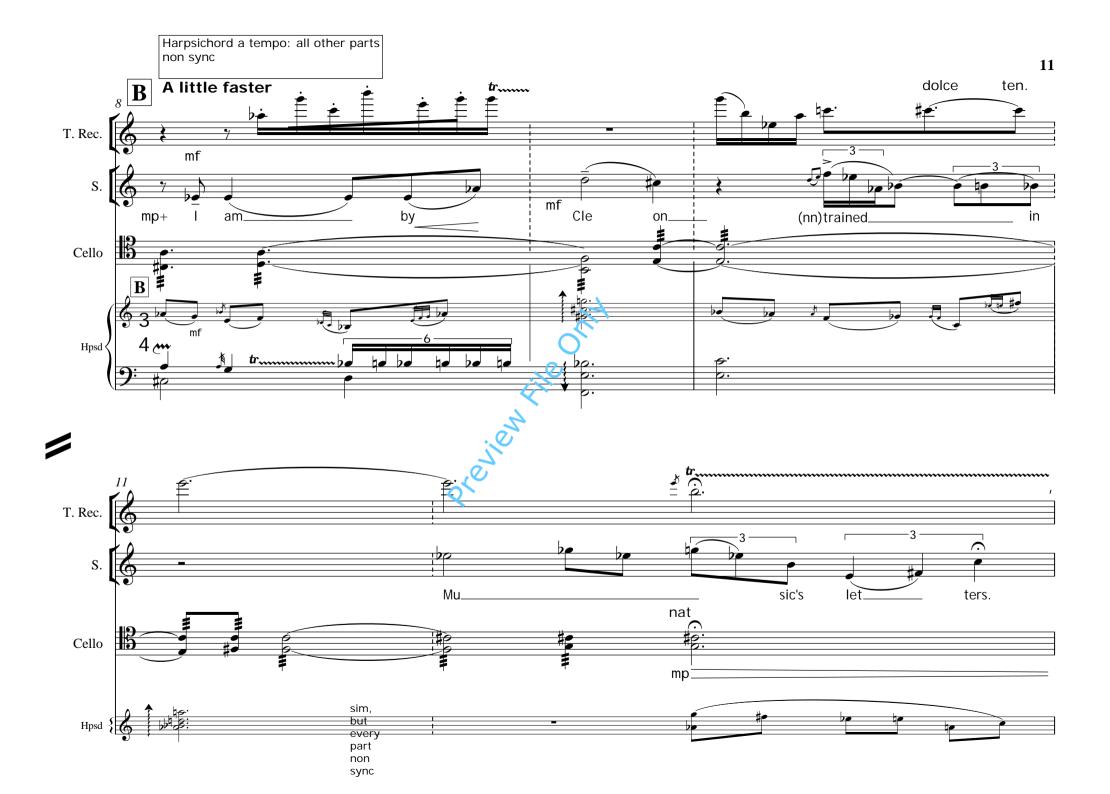




















5. Recitative

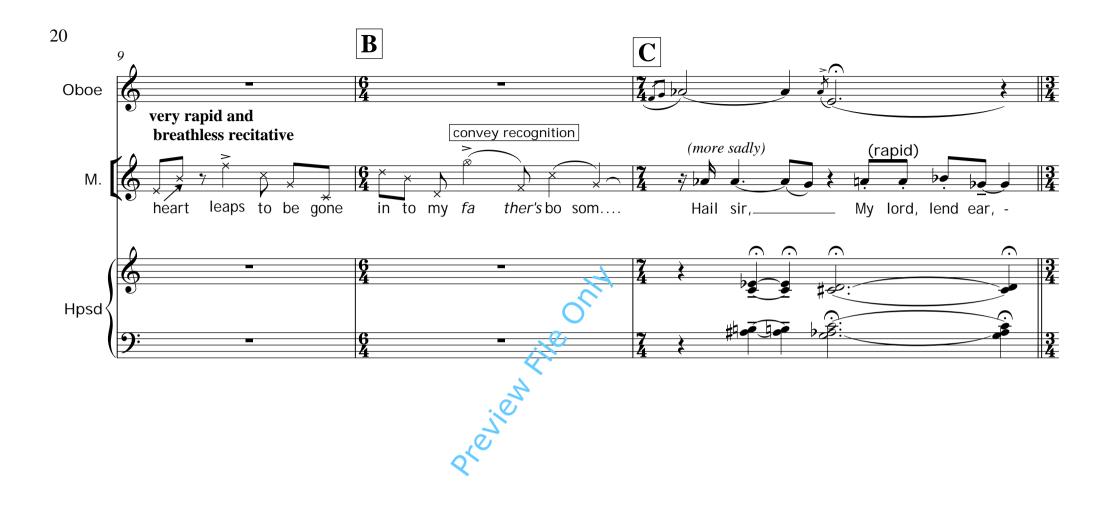


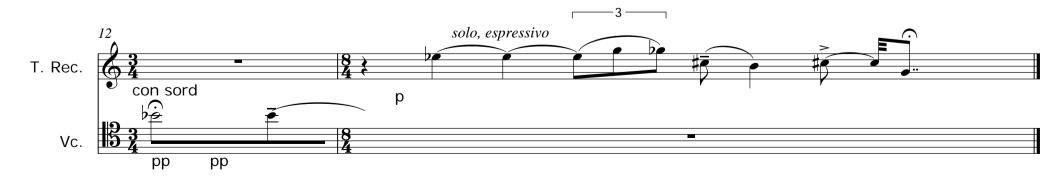




6 Salutation



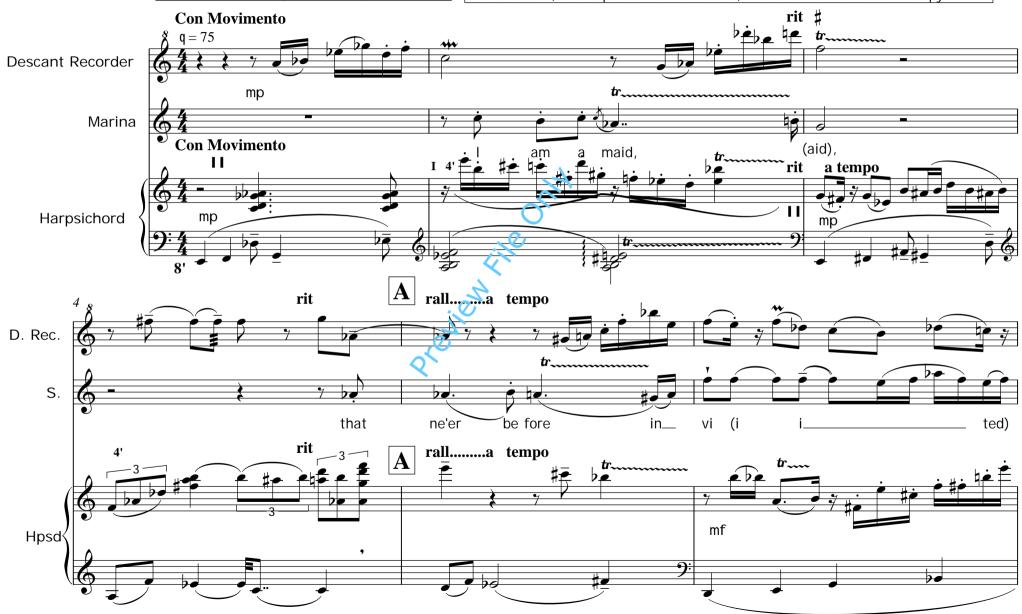




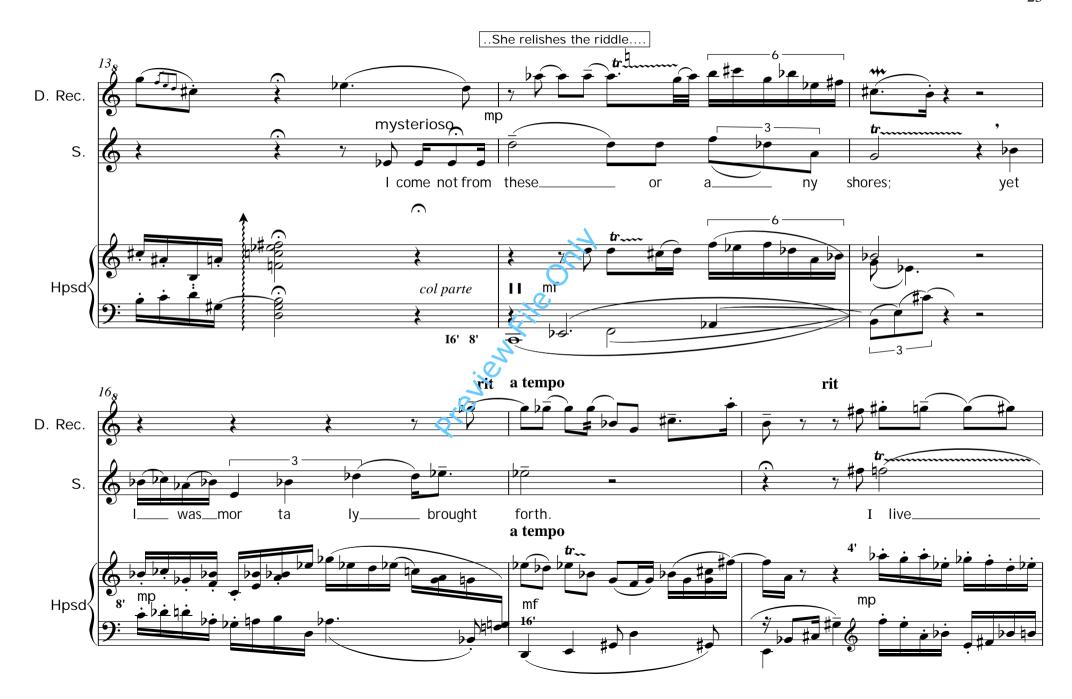
7 ARIA CON OBBLIGATO

Virtuosic, consciously artistic, a "performance".

Despite the 'formality' of the aria, the metre continually slips into the absent-minded suspension' of the rit - and - free bars. This partly reflects Marina's attempt to draw, and to assess, the response from her father, in the manner of Music Therapy.

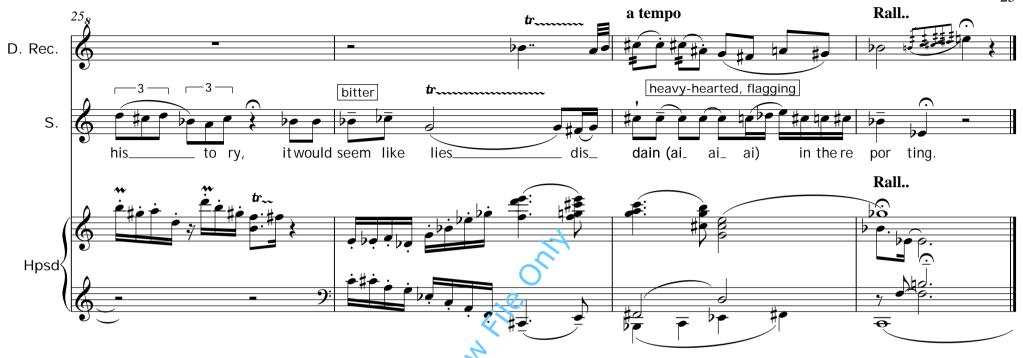






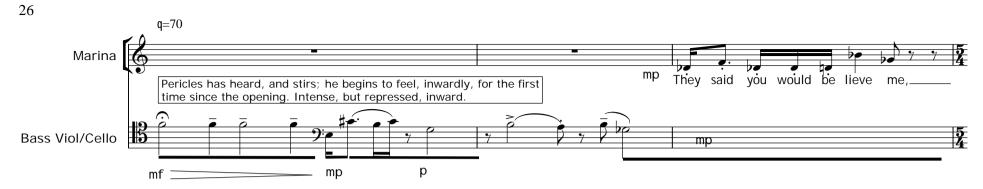






During this movement, trills are elaborate, and executed with turns at the end. You may use double trills where possible, or complex rapid and dense fingerings of all the notes in a treble chord, in a flourish.

8. INTERMEZZO





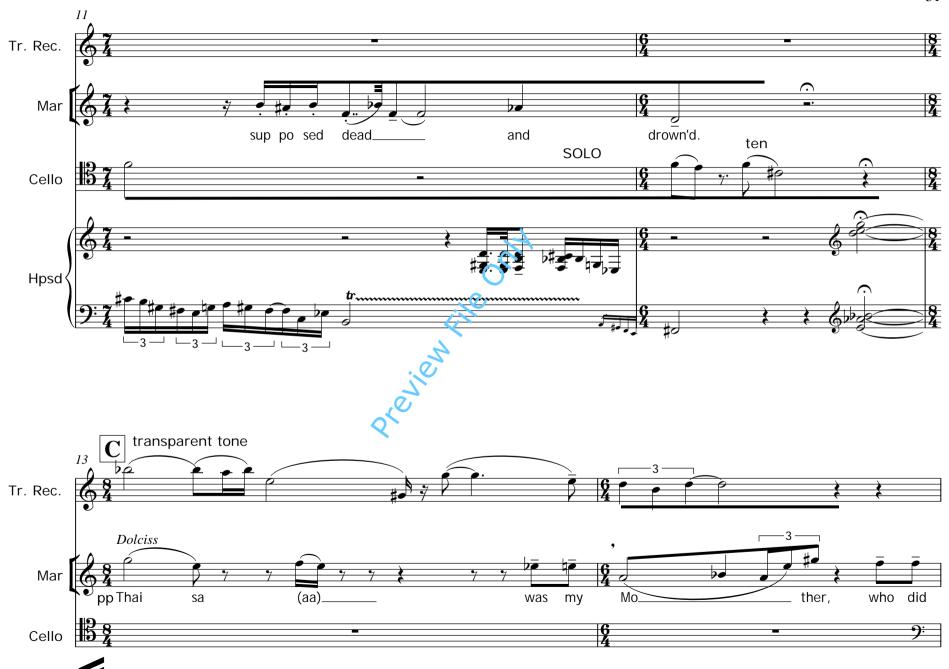


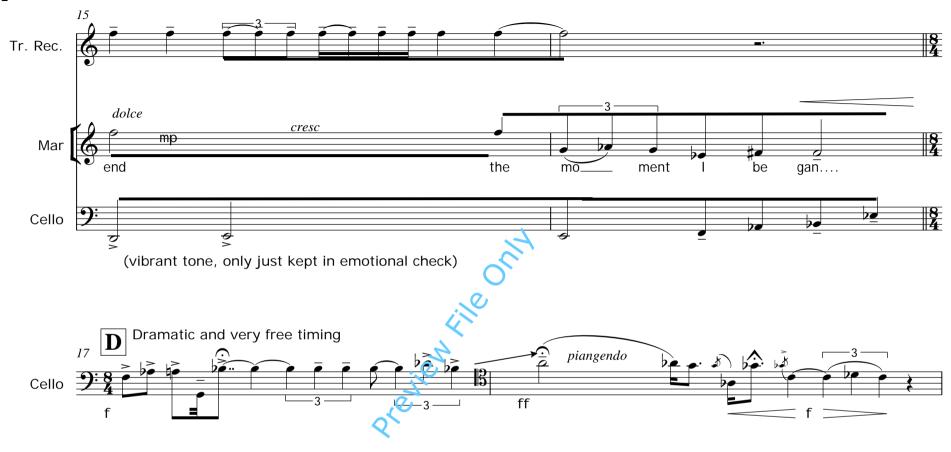
9. Dramatic Quartet: History 2

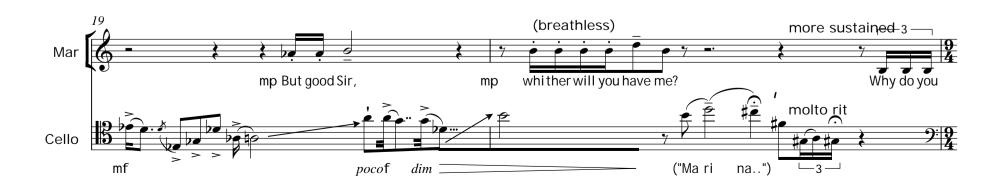














10. Trio and Close

