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Foreward: This piece combines on-stage choreography with the performed music. Here are instructions how to present the work. I consider this performance to begin when the first individual walks out on the stage.

Participants: Piano (P), Flute (F), Horn (H) and Bassoon (B), Trombone (T). Recommend sedate, all-black casual "pit orchestra" clothing. Sex of participants irrelevent. "He/him" used to indicate either sex purely for convenience here.

Equipment: Music stands, standard black 3-legged base, metal, adjustable tilt and height (6 each). Standard non-folding utility chair (4 each, and, if desired, two additional chairs used for harmonica & synthesizer). Piano stool instead of bench (a rotating top would greatly help). Refer to diagram of desired stage lay-out, which is up to the players, but all must be visible, and the wood blocks should be quite apart upstage, stage-right.) The group 4 chairs are sufficiently apart to allow instrument stands for F, B & T (and H, if such exists, else can use chair). A utility, fold-up legs table, upon which are placed the synthesizer and the harmonica at least 2 feet apart. The top of the table should be large enough to allow space for two scores to lay flat for the musicians to see (but in no way obscuring the instrument). The glockenspiel (and one of the music stands) are placed down-stage of the piano, in front of its narrowing curve. The wood blocks & other music stand are located as far upstage and stage-right as possible. By the harmonica is a disinfecting spray and towel for cleaning. Scores are already placed on all music stands and by the harmonica and synthesizer. 2 mallets are at the ready by each of the glockenspiel and wood blocks. Prefer battery-powered synthesizer with reasonable undistorted loudness. Preferred 'patch' (sound) for the synthesizer is "orchestral hit". If such does not exist, a "vocal 'doo' singing" is fine. Beware synthesizers that automatically power-off. Offstage, stage-right but closely accessible, is a standard bottle of 'whisky', with obvious labels, contents being plain water colored as is 'whisky'. Nearby the pretend-whisky will be a sheet of black cloth sufficient in size to cover the wood blocks when laying on the floor, and a "cap gun" (fake handgun) that makes a loud fake shot when fired. The fake gun is loaded with the caps to allow at least 3 shots - more is better in case of 'misfire'. All of the above is in place before the performance begins.

Interactions between P, F, H, B & C should be done with minimal facial emotion or body language, except where specified in the choreography step at hand. *No speaking occurs in this performance.*

Choreography is indexed as follows, and the indicies are placed in the score when something should happen. NOTE: measures which contain only fermatas are NOT to be interpreted as musical; they are "time-spaces" for something to happen.

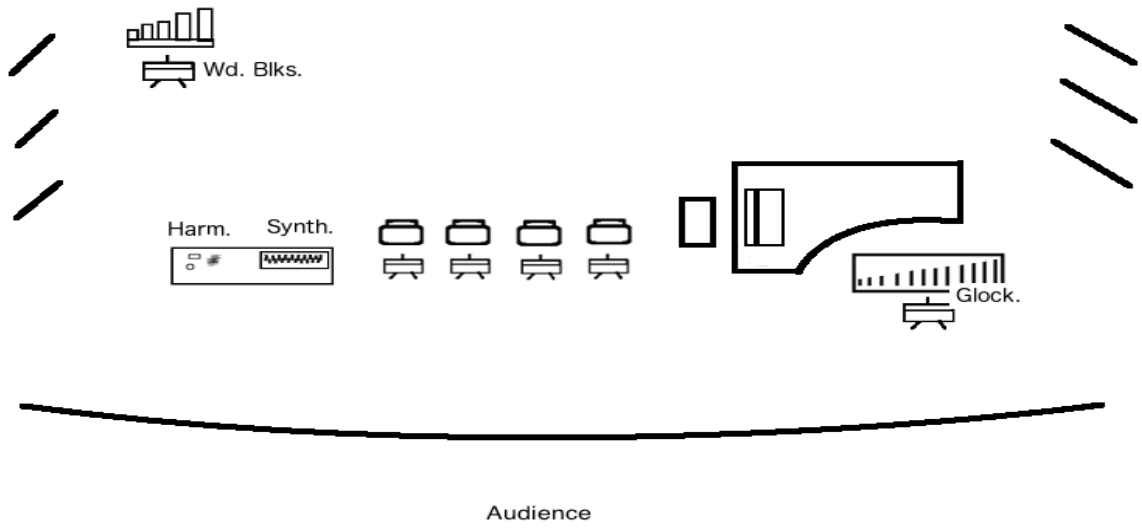
Performance begins.

C0: Single-file with P leading, all enter stage-right, walk upstage of table & 4-group of chairs, and take their seats. Order of C, H, B & T seated is unimportant. All take no notice of the extra instruments already on stage. All carry their instruments (excepting P). All ready their music, and P turns to check if all ready. When all have instruments in-hand, P begins.

C1: P repositions (spins?) himself on the piano bench to sit facing directly towards the audience. As P does this, C, H, B & T give slight positive head-nods to each other for a moment and then put their instruments on the stands already in place. (H can wait to use chair if no stand.) With left-hand only, P plays measure 25 with sufficient repeats until all others have been assigned their new instruments. P does this assignment by pointing with right-hand WHILE playing. (*It's probably WISE to establish in advance who will get what 2nd instrument. It's CRITICAL that whomever gets wood blocks should still be authentic in their stage expressions, as specified here.*) First selected will 'get' the synthesizer, stands, and with some joy walks to the table with synthesizer & harmonica, stops in front of the synth. Second selected will 'get' the glockenspiel, and with assured pleasure in this, stands, walks to the glockenspiel, takes up the mallets in hand. He momentarily, slightly motions the mallets chest-height to "get the feel of them". P waits a moment (still playing), rubs chin as if pondering his next choice. P then assigns who 'gets' the harmonica. That person stands, walks to the location of the harmonica next to the synth, and immediately lightly sprays the harmonica with the disinfectant, and wipes it off. As that is happening, the remaining musician has hung his head in shame and disappointment. Rather than KNOW he "has gotten" the wood blocks, he waits nonetheless for the inevitable. P, still playing with left-hand, sees remaining musician's reluctance to go to the wood blocks, with right-hand, snaps his fingers a few times, whereupon the musician stands, pauses, turns whole body to look straight upstage, turns head to look for a moment at the wood blocks, then trudges over to them. He takes up the mallets with no interest or energy, and waits.

C2: P stops playing the repeated measure, and returns to standard seating position. When P sees all are ready with new instruments, P begins playing.

C3: (The music played by C, H, B & T on these foreign instruments is contained within the key of 'C', and limited to C, D, E, F & G notes. As such, expert playing is not expected, but should be well-within the ability of the players. Harmonica - until otherwise directed - plays notated rhythm using only blowing-out, and not moving to other notes left or right. Also, no attempt to play single notes - just whatever bunch of notes occur is OK. The harmonica is held between thumb and first finger of each hand, and NOT in any traditional, familiar way as commonly seen. Wood blocks are played roughly as note C is the largest block, and note G is the smallest block. This assumes a 5-block set of wood blocks.)



C4: With C, H, B & T remaining where they are, P stands, walks a few steps down-stage, turns to the glockenspiel player, without speaking, motions with hands as if asking "are you good with the glock?", to which the response is a thumbs-up. P turns and walks a few steps towards the table with synthesizer & harmonica, and makes a smiliar motion "are you both OK with your instruments?", to which the response is also both giving thumbs-up. P turns towards the person playing the wood blocks, makes the hand motion "are you good with the wood blocks?". The wood blocks player puts hands (with mallets) down at his sides, tilts head towards P in a manner to indicate "I hate what I'm doing", then looks stage-right to show his distain. P returns to the piano & sits. The glockenspiel player has the first 'solo'. The solo is played as written. When P sees glockenspiel player is ready, P taps a "1-2-3-4" with hand on piano to provide count-in.

C5: When P and glockenspiel finish, all EXCEPT wood blocks player burst into enthusiastic applause for a few seconds, which glockenspiel player graciously accepts. Harmonica has the second 'solo', in which the player uses the rhythm shown, but can improvise (with limited variety) the notes blown and 'drawn'. Now the full range of the harmonica (low to high) can be used.

C6: When P and harmonica finish, all EXCEPT wood blocks player burst into enthusiastic applause for a few seconds, which harmonica player graciously accepts b*y holding harmonica high above head and waving it back and forth a bit*. Synthesizer has third 'solo', played as written. When P sees synthesizer is ready, he begins playing.

C7: When P and synthesizer finish, all EXCEPT wood blocks player burst into enthusiastic applause for a few seconds, which synth player modestly accepts with a small bow. After the bow, those who have soloed return to their chairs, but before sitting, turn their chairs to face directly towards the wood blocks location. Wood blocks has the final 'solo'. P begins playing after chairs are turned and seats have been taken.

C8: The wood blocks player (W.B.) - with arms hanging down, mallets in hands - turns head to stare glaringly at P for the horrible music being played. W.B. occasionally looks upwards left, upwards right in frustration, until after the 2nd repeat of the 3 measure 'intro' he plays the solitary first note of his 'solo'.

C9: In this measure, W.B. player - with increasing anger - loudly plays the 6 eighth notes - not necessarily in the correct rhythm.

C10: Immediately after the 6 eighth notes, the W.B. player leaves the mallets on the W.B. stand, exits stage-right to get the bottle of pretend whisky, which he brings back to the stage. As P is playing, W.B. casually walks over to the 3 seated musicians (during which he sways/moves slightly with the music P is playing), and in front of each one - one at a time - takes a sip of the pretend whisky, then returns to his 4-group seat, waits for music to end if it is still playing. If - on rehearsal - it's found the W.B. is in his seat well before P finishes playing, W.B. can extend the time spent in front of the 3 musicians while taking sips of the pretend whisky, perhaps by doing a "dainty pirouette" between each sip.

C11: When P is finished playing, the three musicians previously facing towards W.B. now gingerly stand, turn their chairs back to face the audience. The former W.B. player offers the pretend whisky to the others, but they decline. It's OK if P sees this interaction. Former W.B. player takes one more sip of the pretend whisky, puts the bottle under his chair, stands with determined resolve, and walks assertedly offstage stage-right, where he gets the fake gun with caps and black cloth sheet (which he drapes over his shoulder). (As former W.B. player is walking offstage, P repositions himself with back to the piano to watch what's going on. The seated musicians turn heads to watch the former W.B. player as he leaves then returns.) He returns to the stage going directly to the W.B., which he lays down on the stage floor. He steps back a few paces towards center-stage, aims the fake gun with caps, and "fires-off" 1, then 2 'shots' directly at the W.B. laying on the floor. After a brief moment, he drapes the black fabric over the W.B. and walks back to his chair with an expression of satisfied happiness. As he sits, he scratches his forhead a few times with the barrel-end of the fake gun, then realizes what he is doing, and quickly puts the gun under the chair. He looks at the others on the stage to see they're not sure what to do. After a moment, all realize things are back to normal, P returns to facing the piano keyboard, and all ready their instruments. P checks to see all ready, then begins.

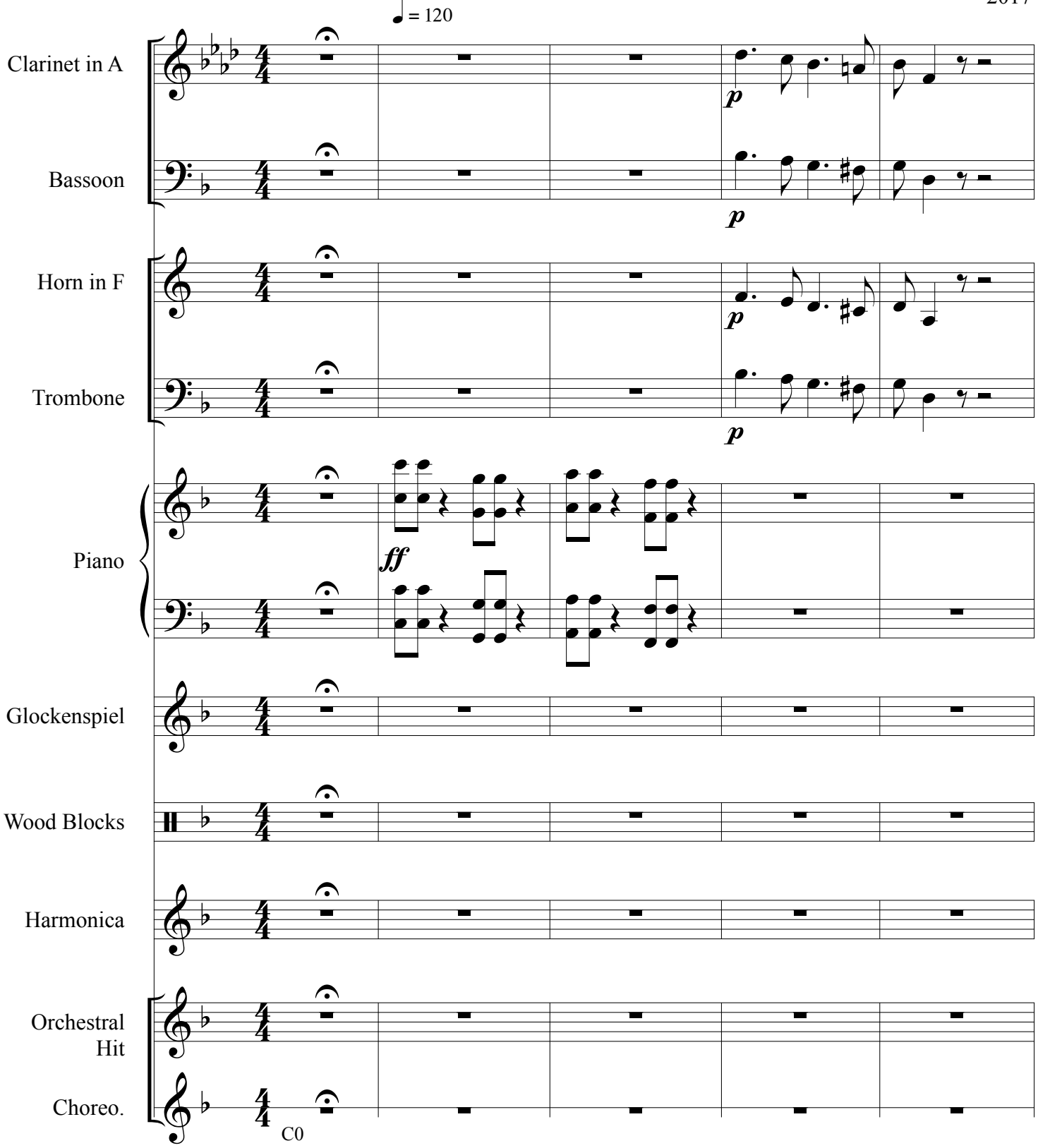
C12: All musicians - taking their instruments - stand and casually walk offstage, stage-right, except former W.B. player, who detours to the dead W.B. laying under its black shroud. He stands there just a moment, then exits stage-right.

Applause: All return to center-stage, down-stage of the 4-group of chairs, and take individual bows, then group bow. Repeat if requested. Exit at will.

Choreographed Episode for 5 Performers

Robert John Magnuson

2017



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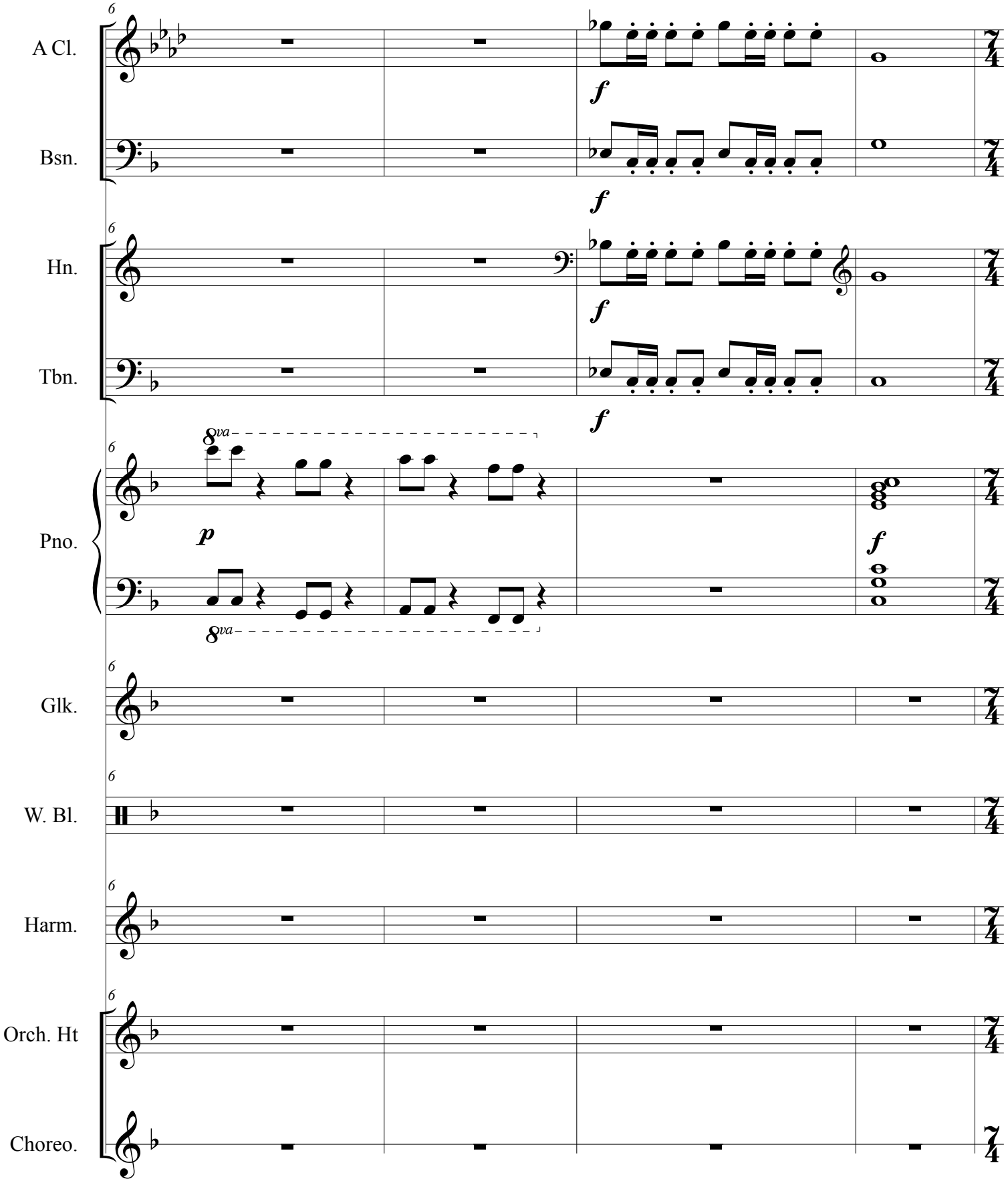
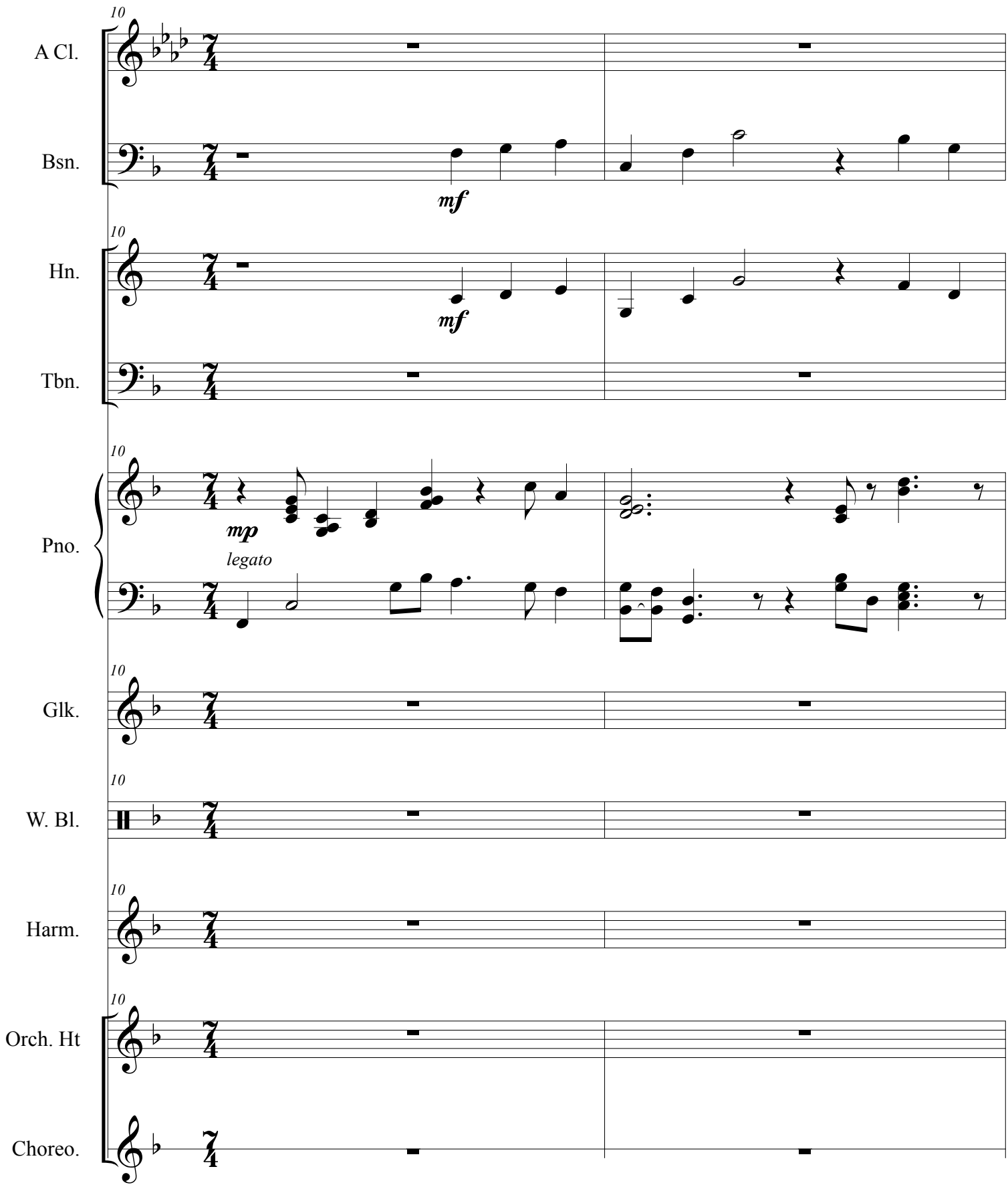

A Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tbn.
Pno.
Glk.
W. Bl.
Harm.
Orch. Ht
Choreo.
6
f
p
8va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A Cl.
Bsn.
mf
10
Hn.
mf
Tbn.
10
Pno.
mp
legato
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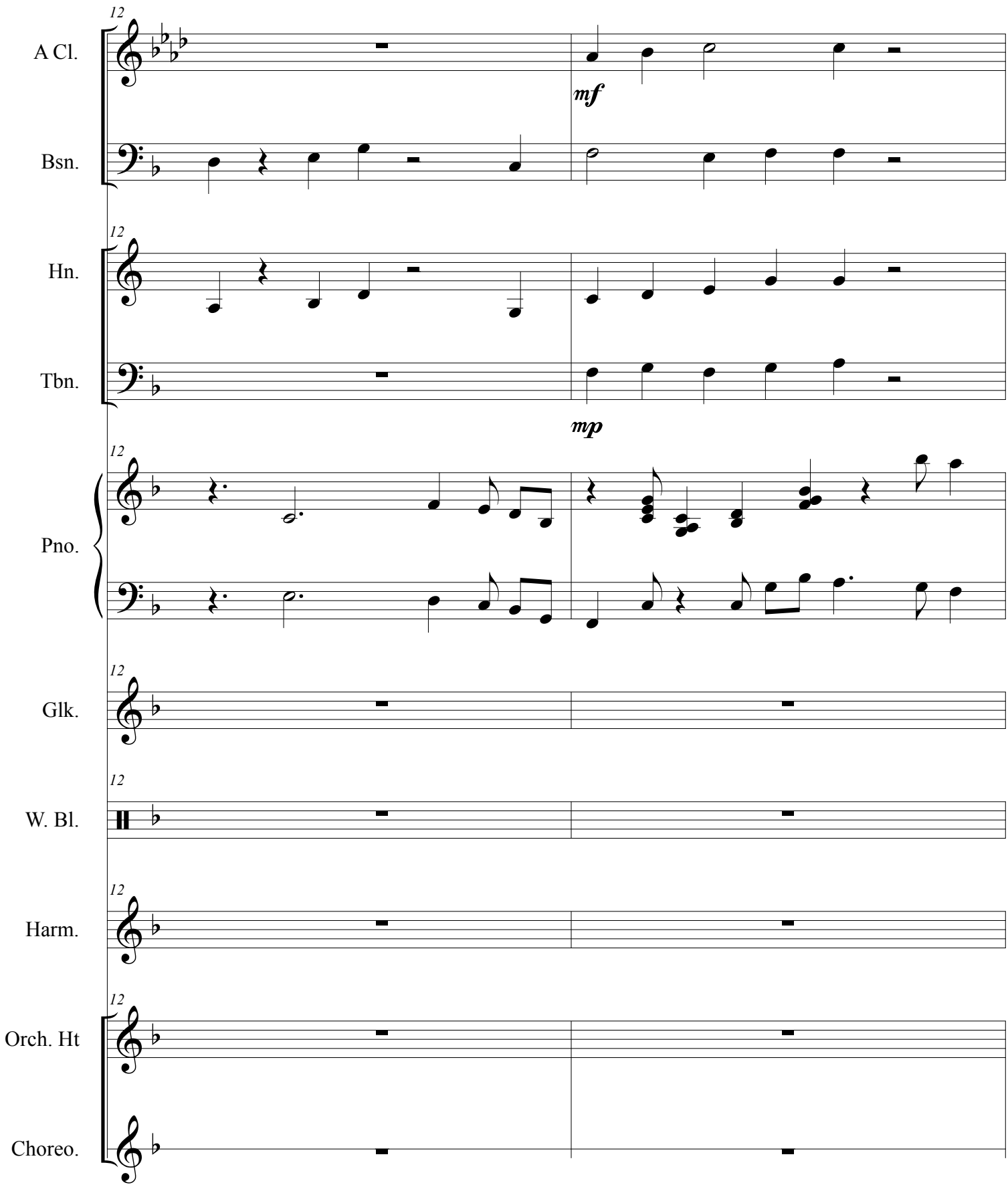
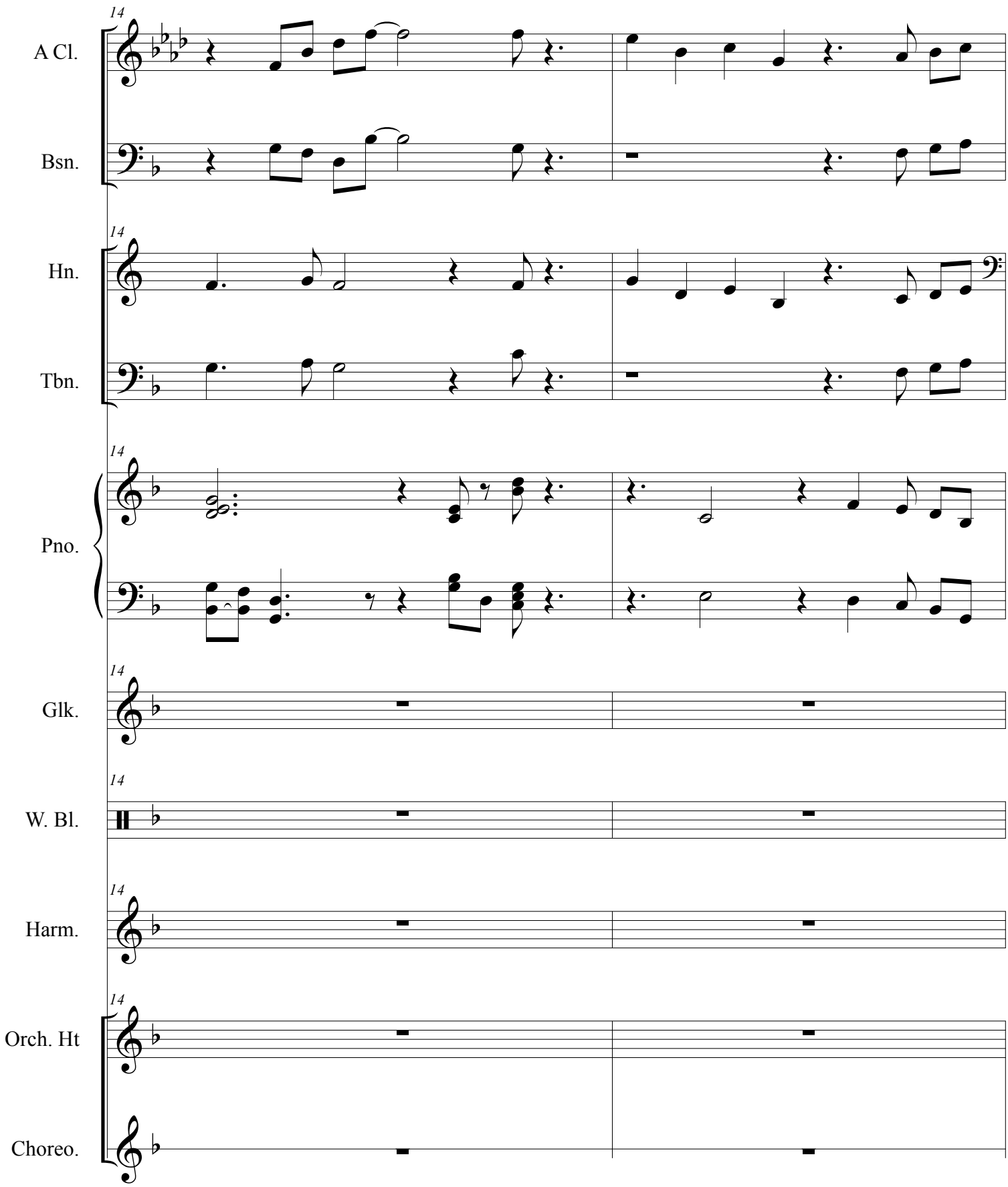
Glk.
10
W. Bl.
10
Harm.
10
Orch. Ht
Choreo.


12
A Cl.
Bsn.
mf
12
Hn.
Tbn.
mp
12
Pno.
12
Glk.
12
W. Bl.
12
Harm.
12
Orch. Ht
Choreo.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Bsn.
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Hn.
Tbn.
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Pno.
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Glk.
14
W. Bl.
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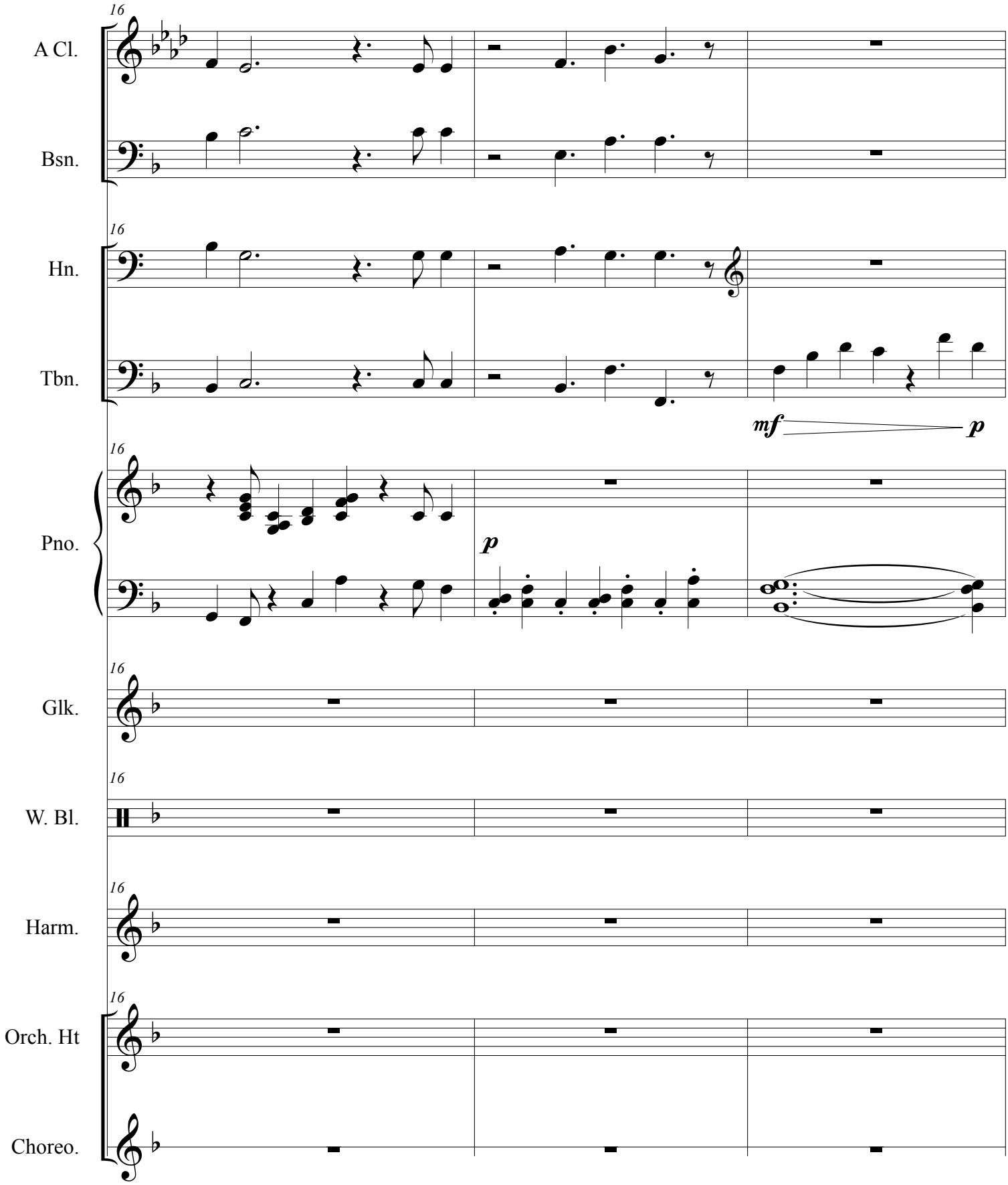
Harm.
14
Orch. Ht
Choreo.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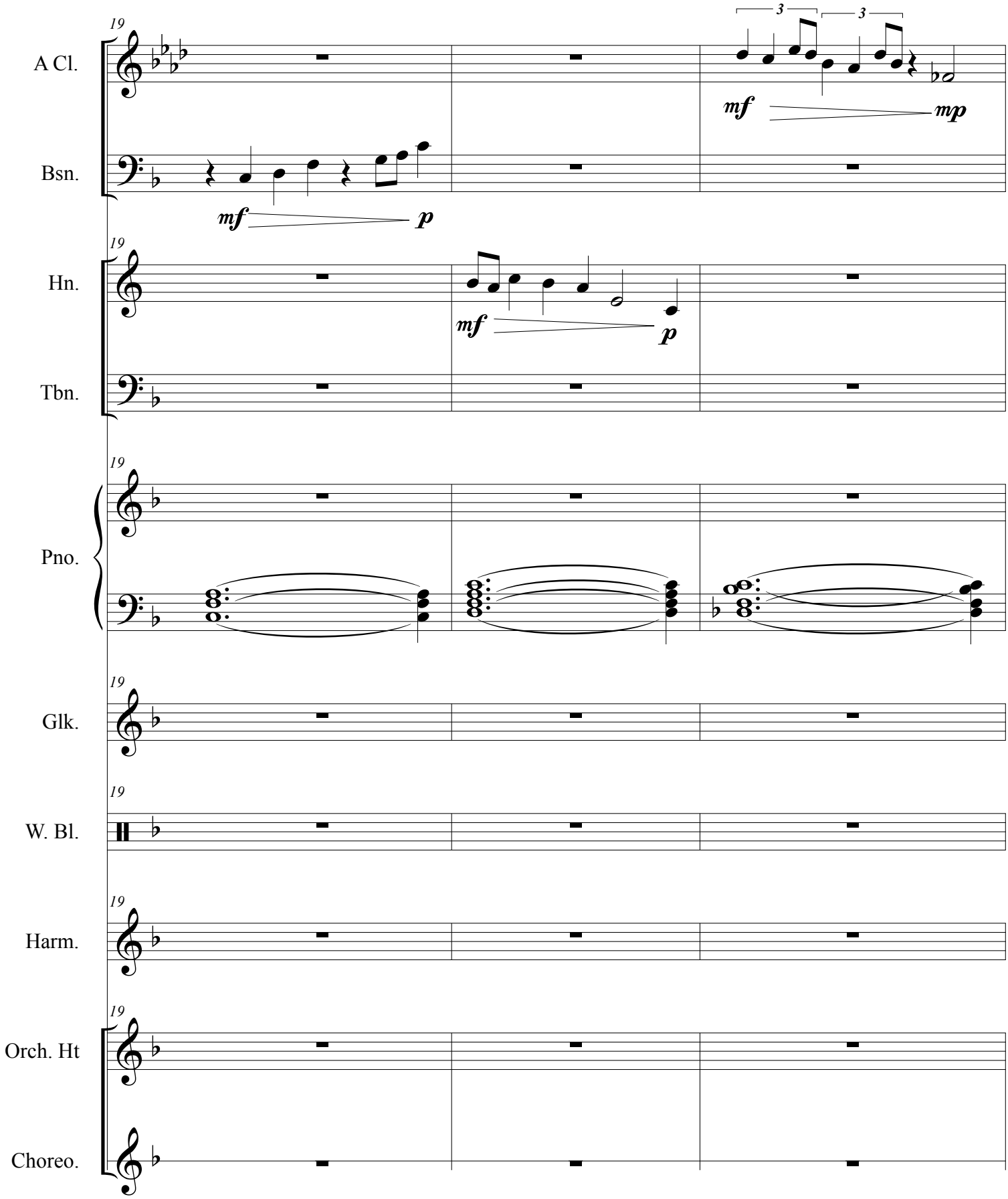
A Cl.
Bsn.
16
Hn.
Tbn.
mf
p
16
Pno.
p
16
Glk.
16
W. Bl.
16
Harm.
16
Orch. Ht
Choreo.


19
A Cl.
Bsn.
3
3
mf
mp
mf
p
19
Hn.
Tbn.
mf
p
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Pno.
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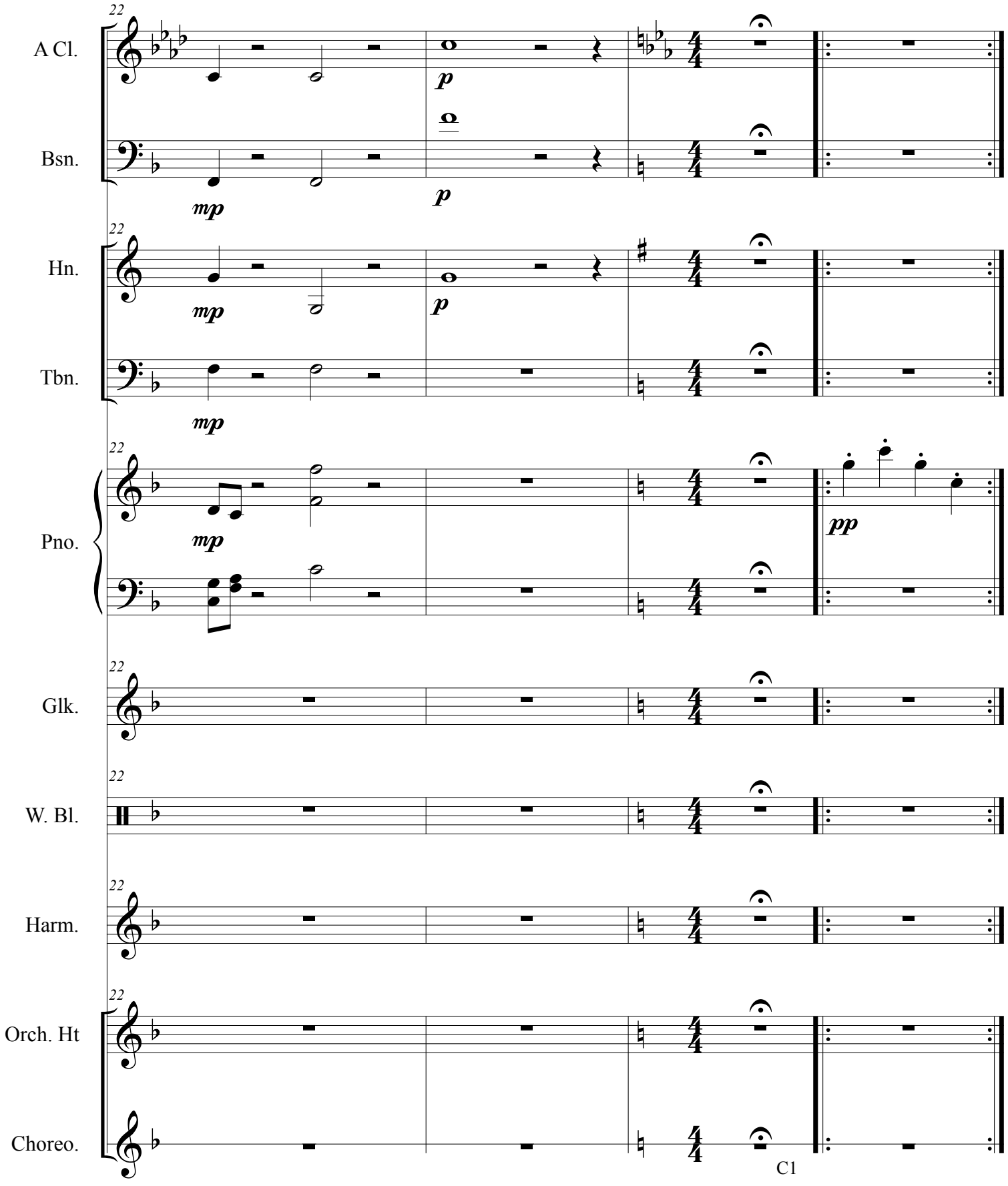
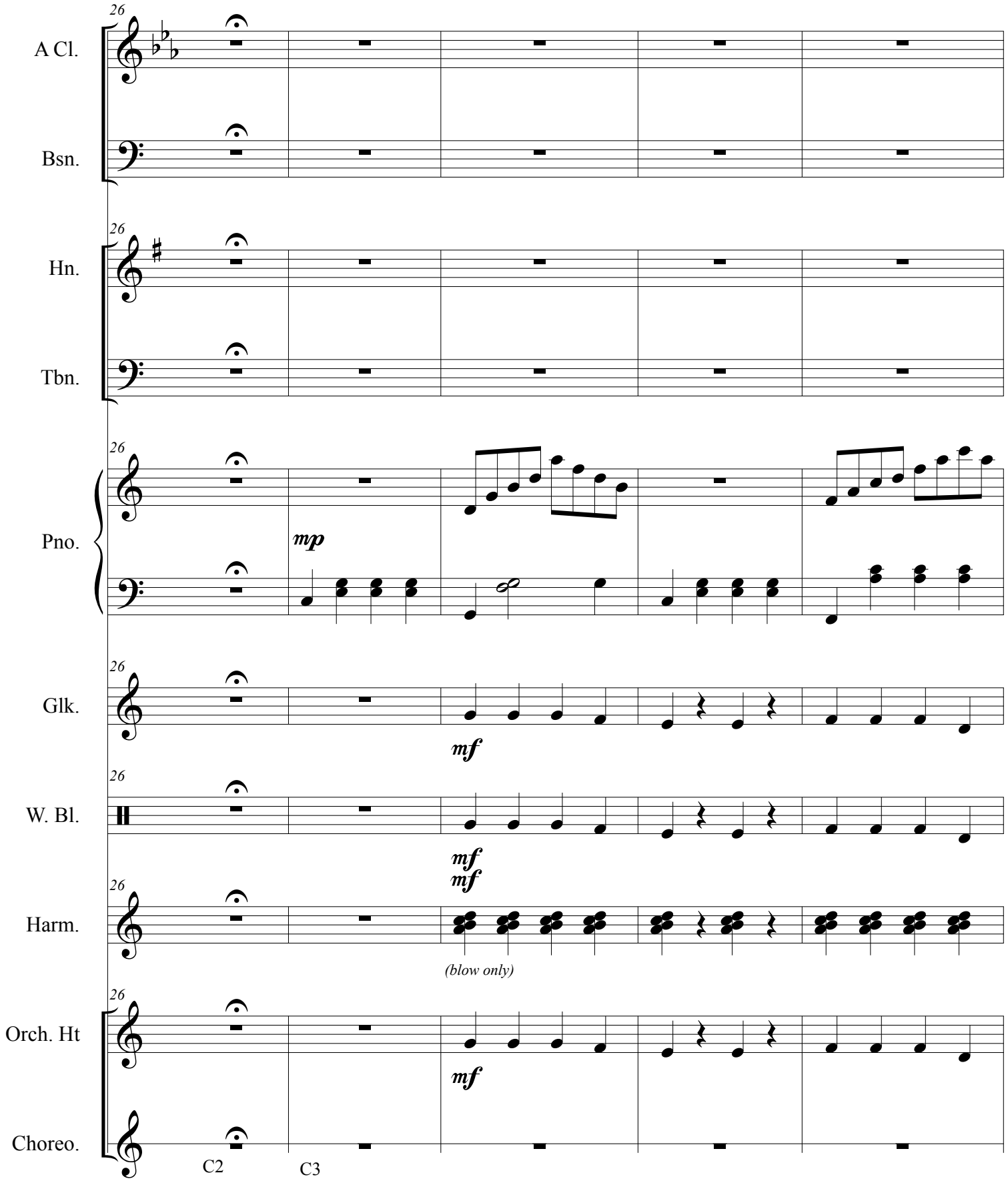
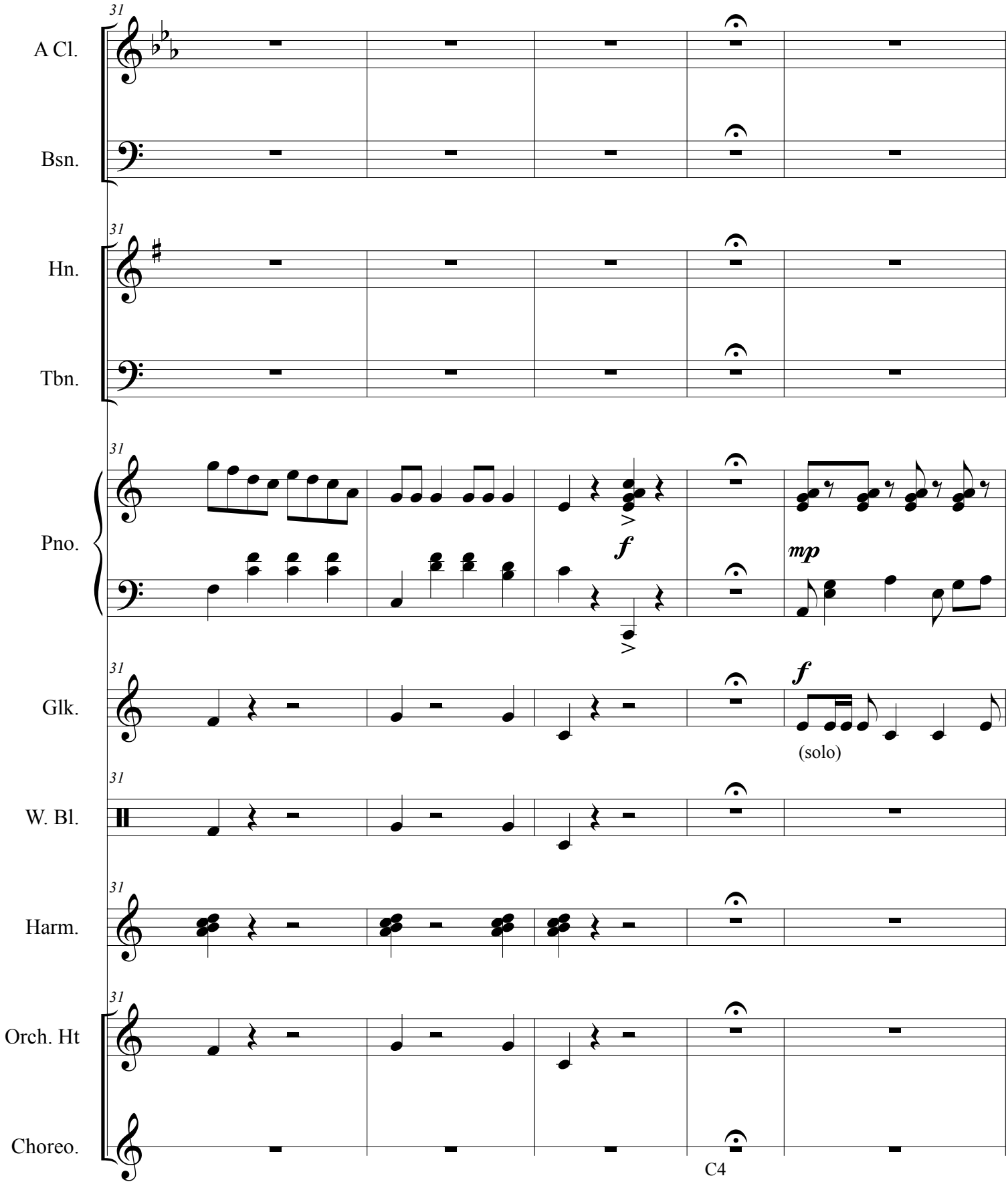
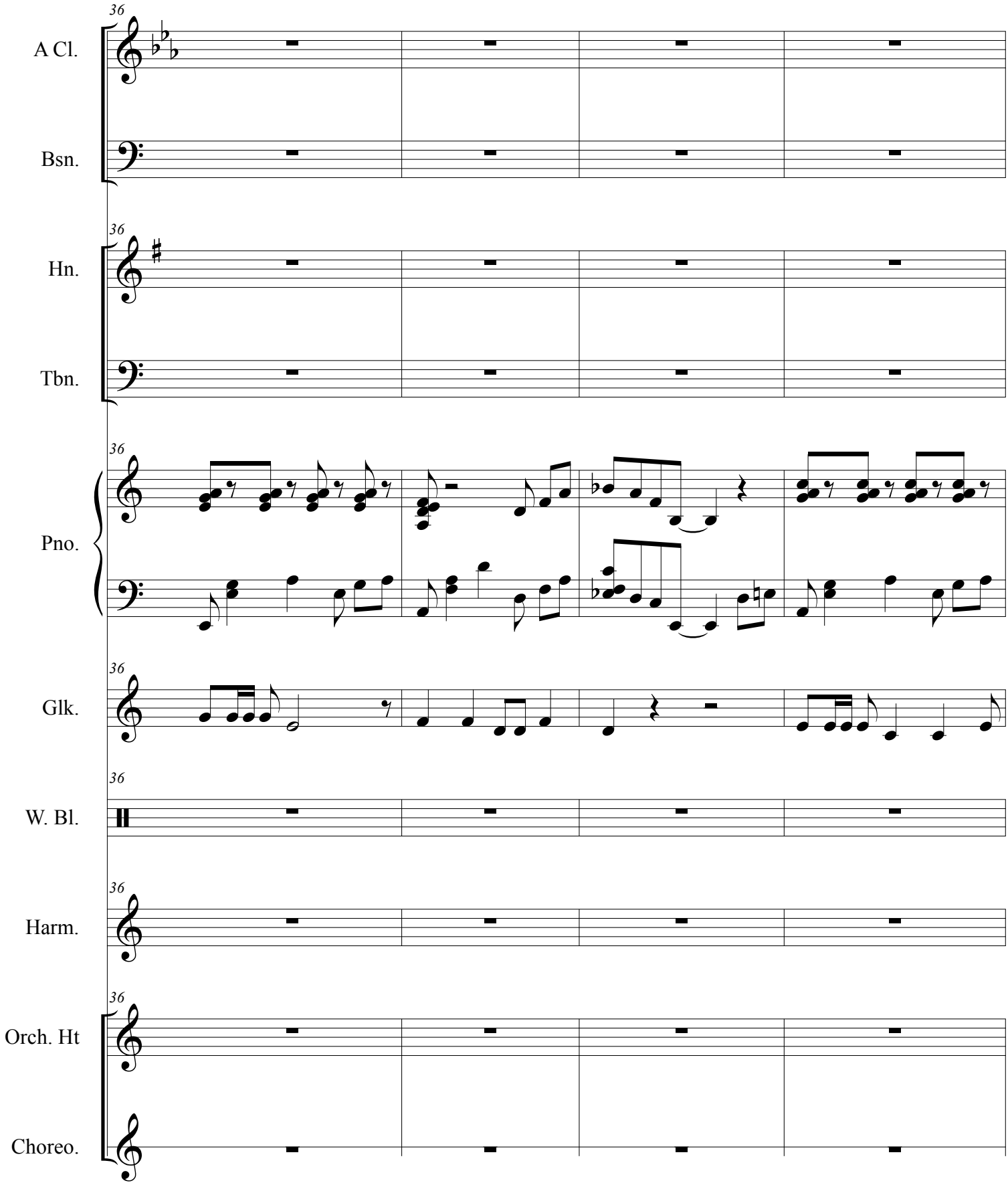
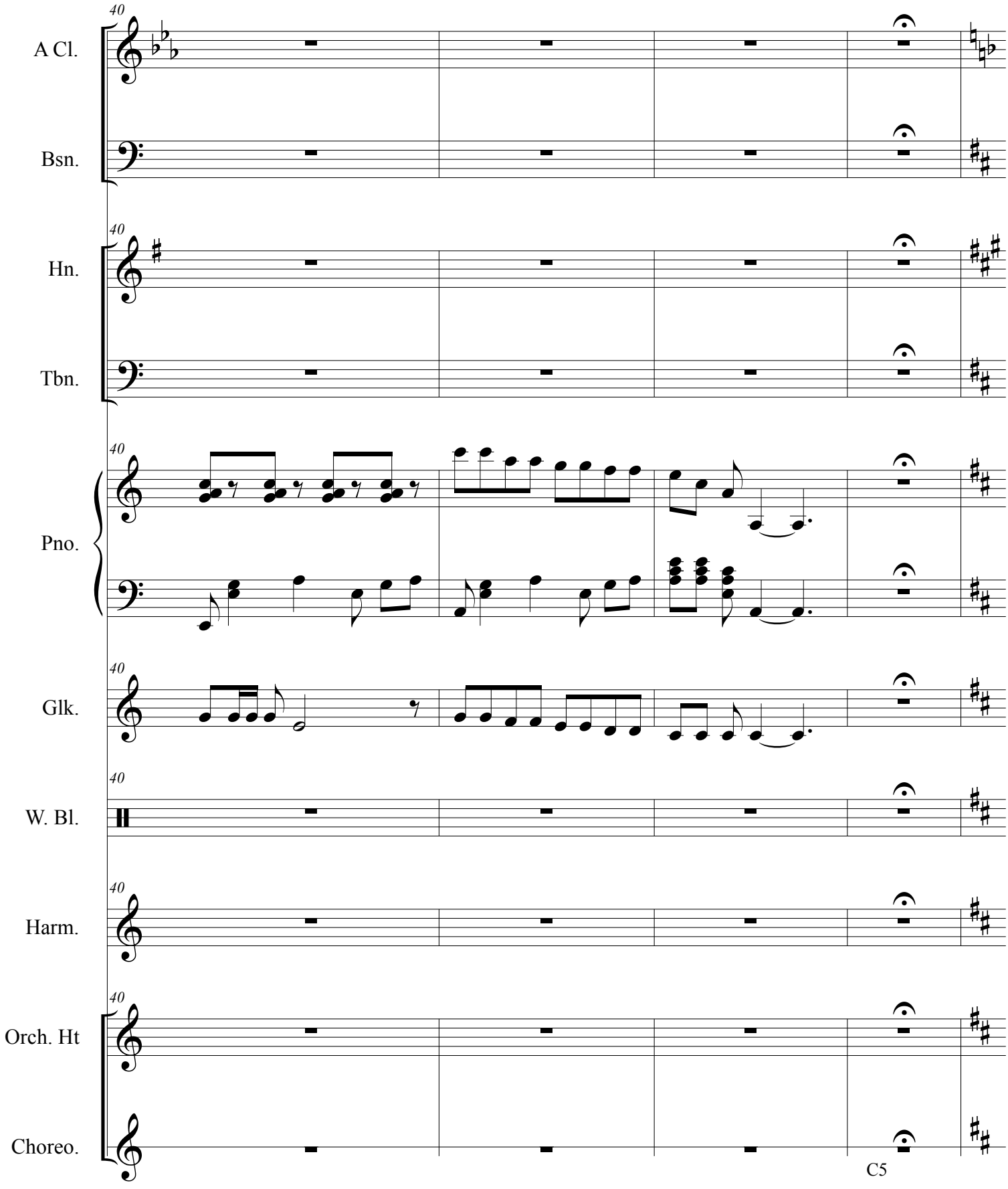
Glk.
19
W. Bl.
19
Harm.
19
Orch. Ht
Choreo.

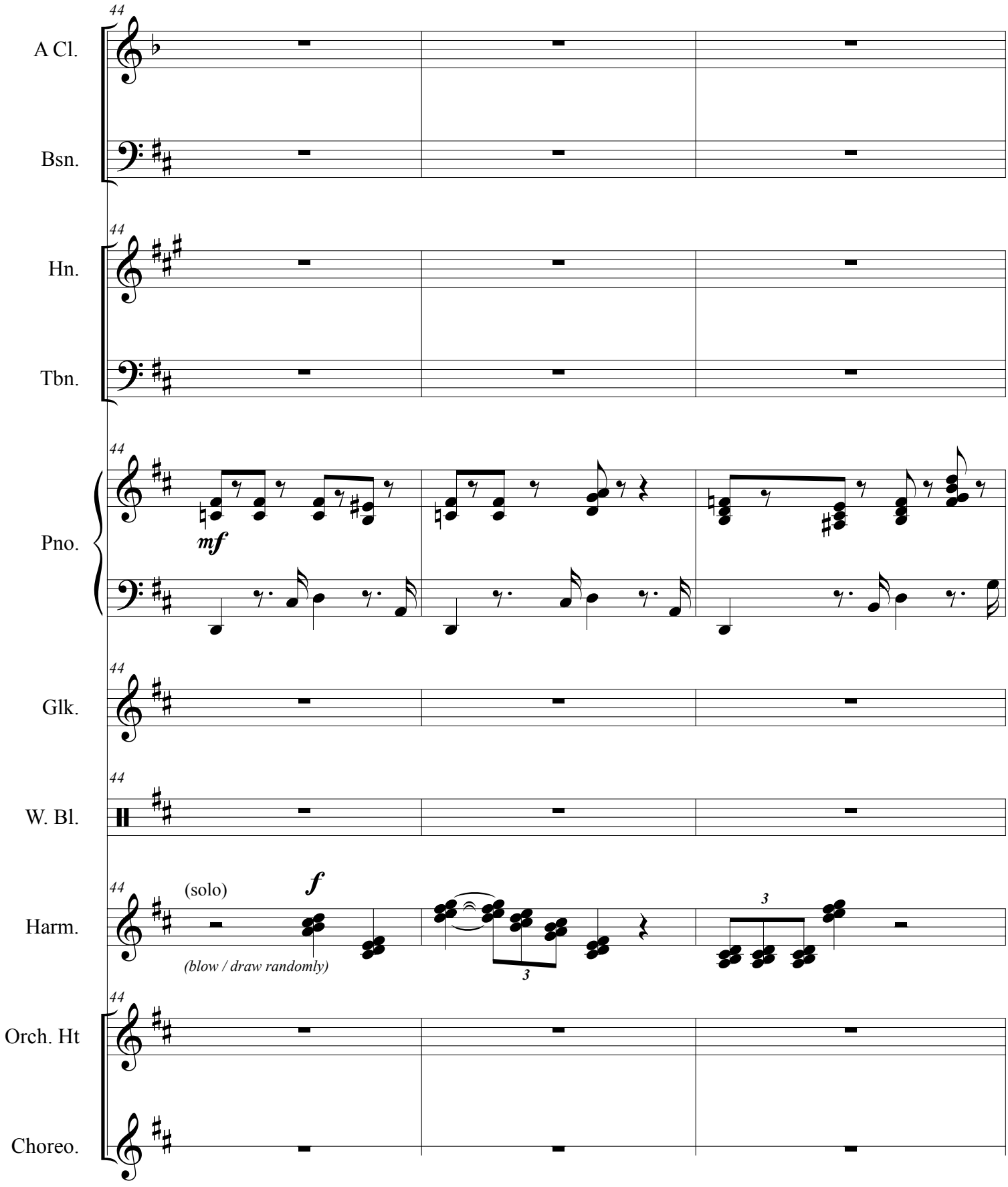

22
A Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tbn.
Pno.
Glk.
W. Bl.
Harm.
Orch. Ht
Choreo.
mp
p
pp
C1

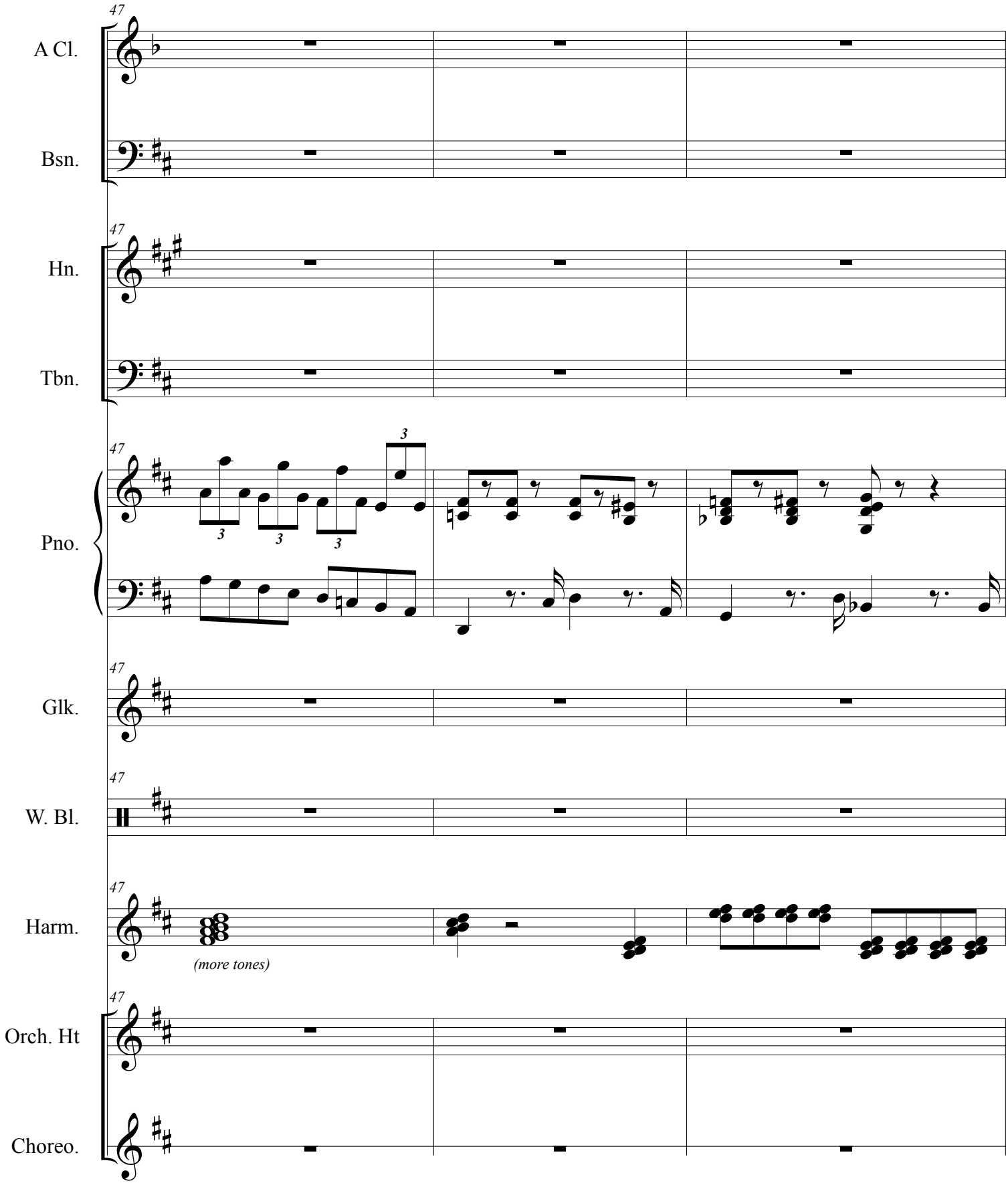

26
A Cl.
Bsn.
26
Hn.
Tbn.
26
Pno.
mp
26
Glk.
mf
26
W. Bl.
mf
mf
26
Harm.
(blow only)
26
Orch. Ht
mf
Choreo.
C2
C3

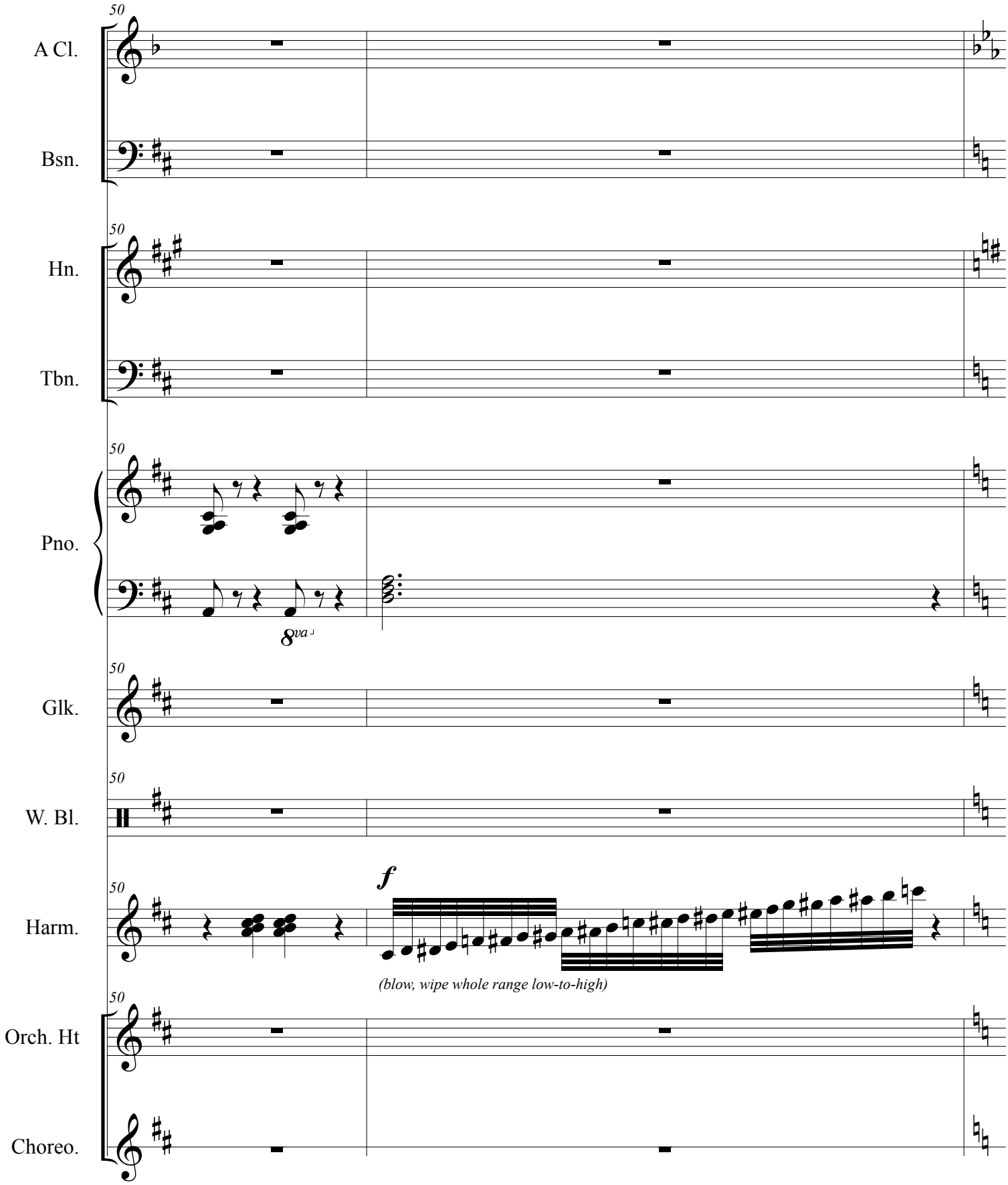

31
A Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tbn.
Pno.
Glk.
W. Bl.
Harm.
Orch. Ht
Choreo.
f
mp
f
(solo)
C4

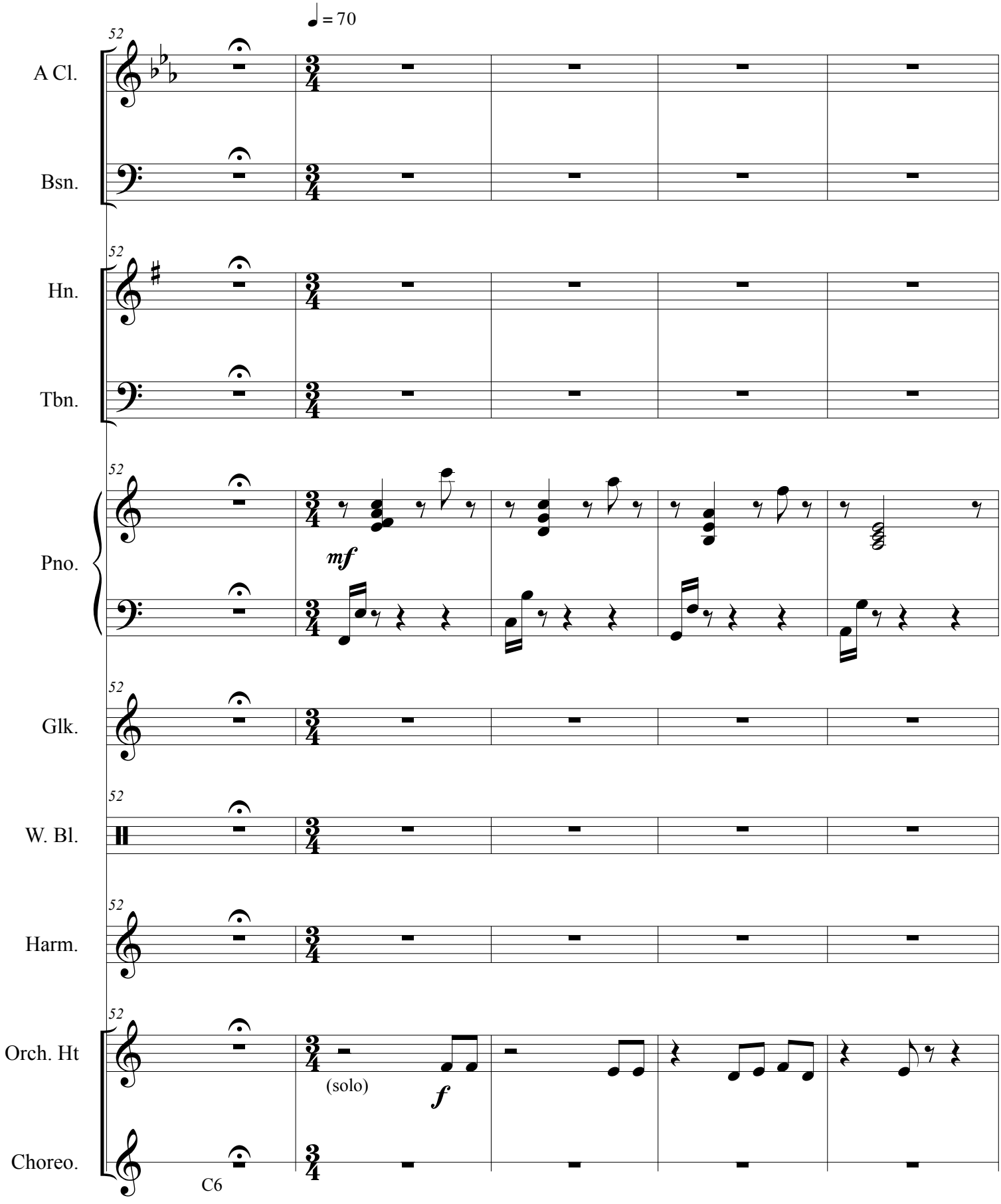

36
A Cl.
Bsn.
36
Hn.
Tbn.
36
Pno.
36
Glk.
36
W. Bl.
36
Harm.
36
Orch. Ht
Choreo.

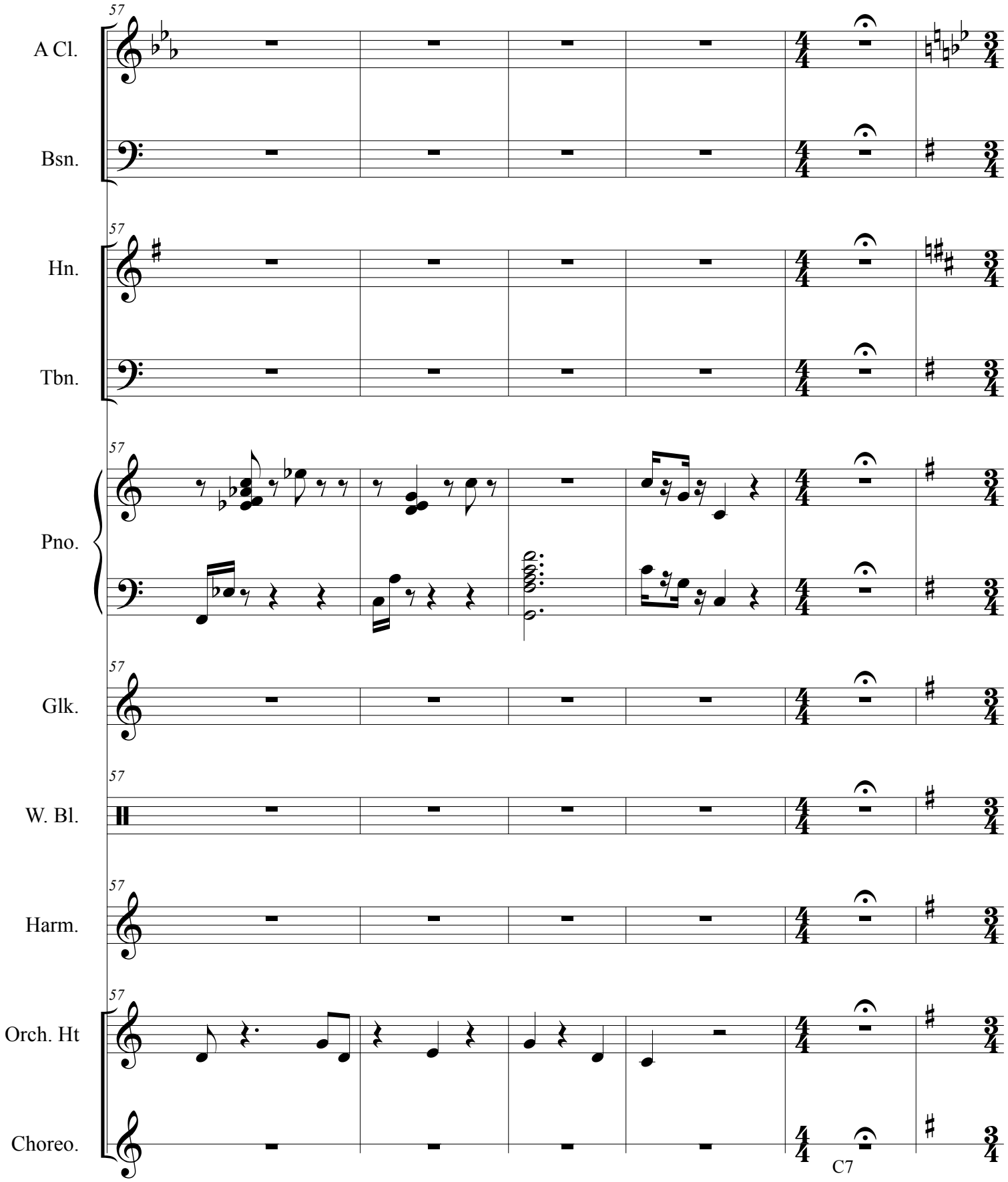

40
A Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tbn.
Pno.
Glk.
W. Bl.
Harm.
Orch. Ht
Choreo.
C5

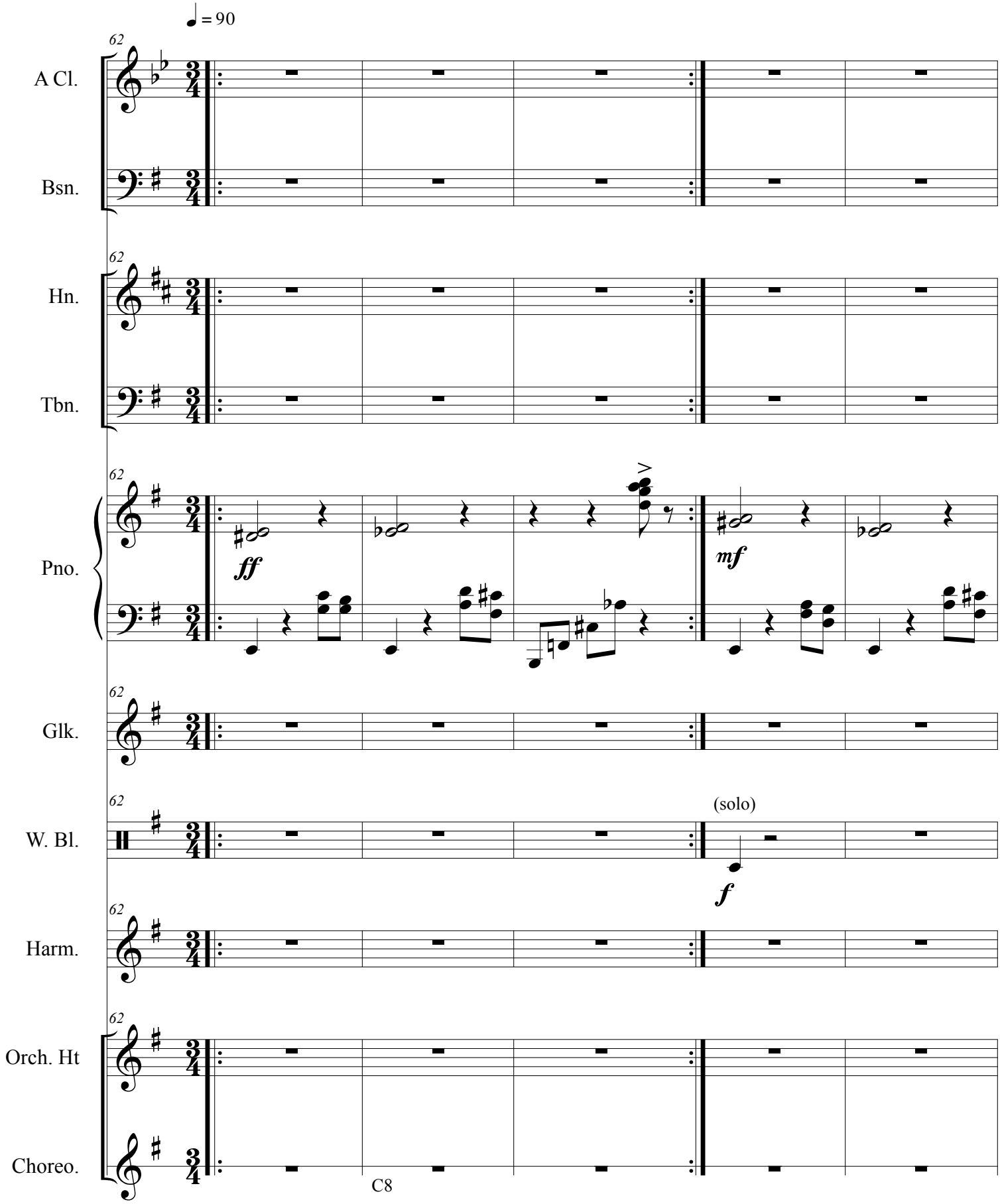

44
A Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tbn.
Pno.
mf
Glk.
W. Bl.
Harm.
(solo)
f
(blow / draw randomly)
3
3
Orch. Ht
Choreo.


47
A Cl.
Bsn.
47
Hn.
Tbn.
47
Pno.
47
Glk.
47
W. Bl.
47
Harm.
(more tones)
47
Orch. Ht
Choreo.


50
A Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tbn.
Pno.
8va
Glk.
W. Bl.
Harm.
f
(blow, wipe whole range low-to-high)
Orch. Ht
Choreo.


♩ = 70
52
A Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tbn.
Pno.
mf
Glk.
W. Bl.
Harm.
Orch. Ht
(solo)
f
Choreo.
C6


57
A Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tbn.
Pno.
Glk.
W. Bl.
Harm.
Orch. Ht
Choreo.
C7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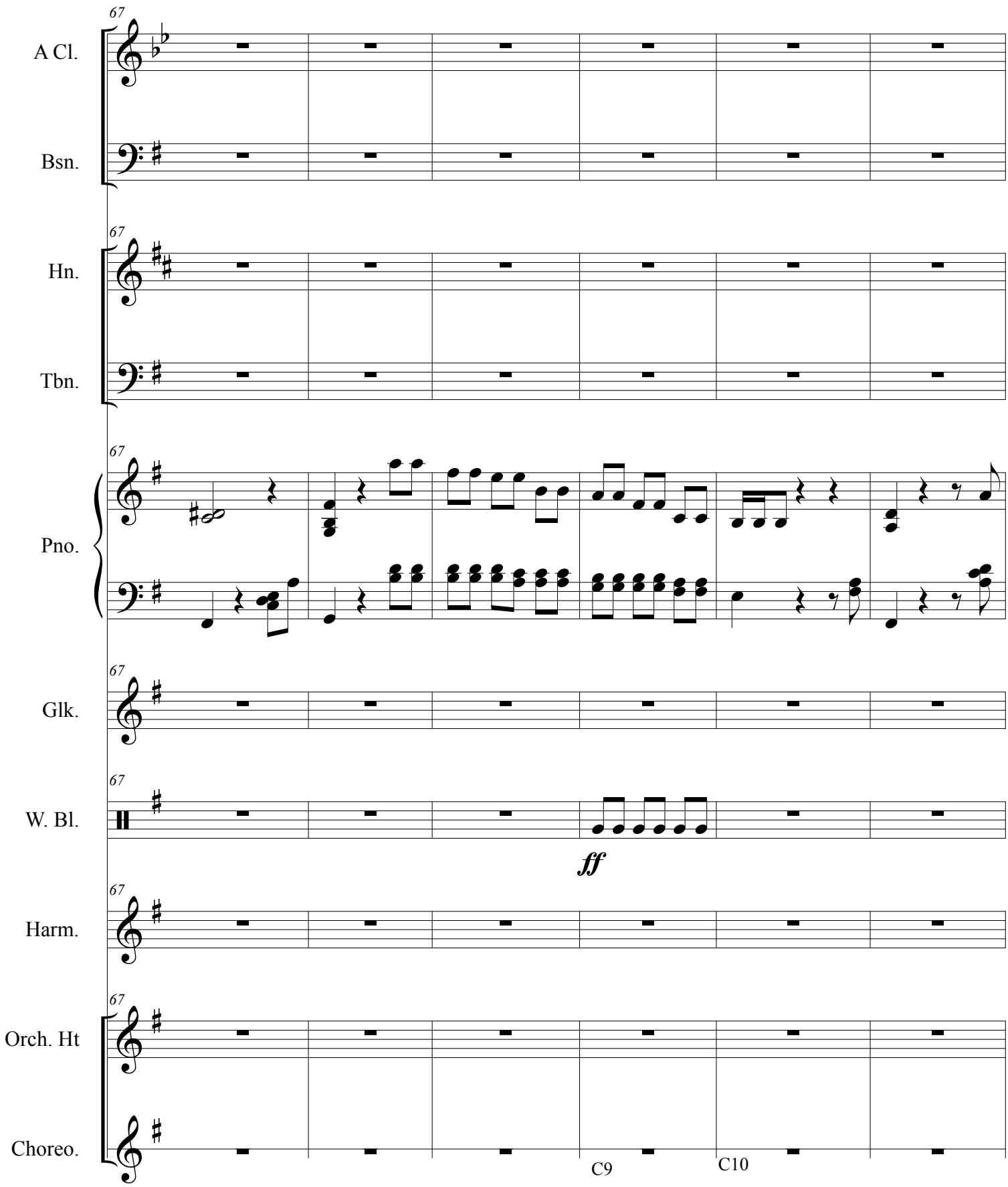
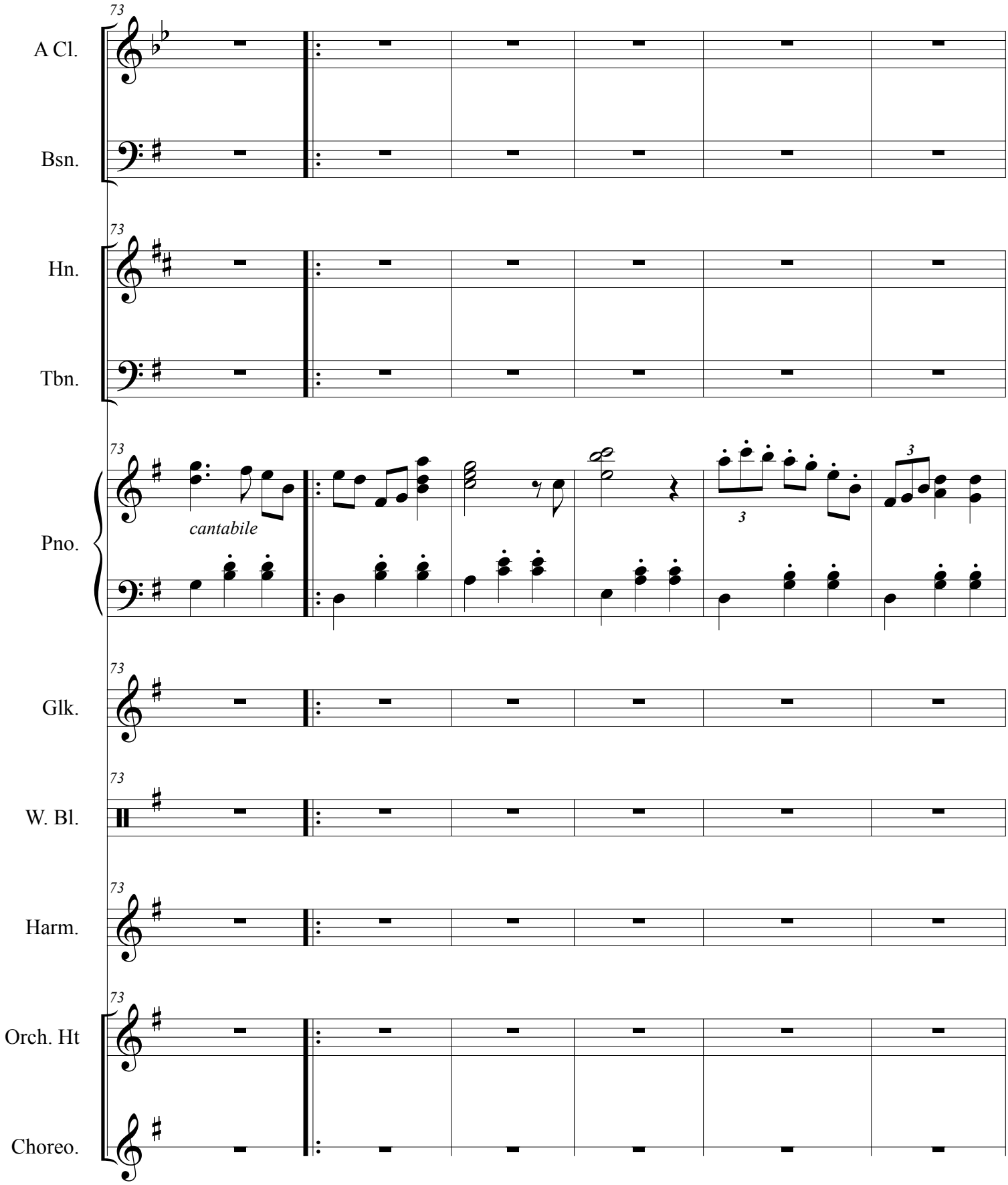
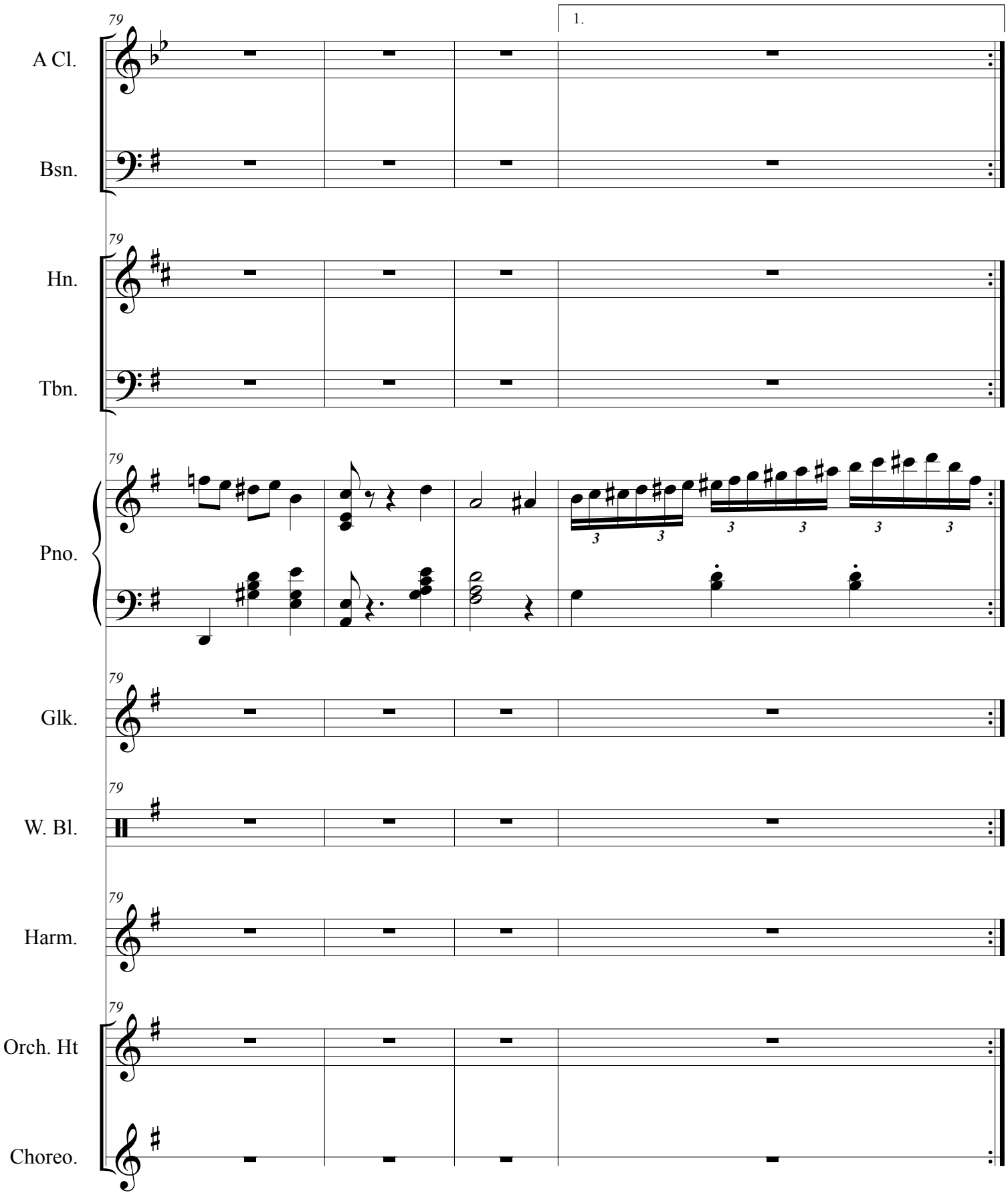
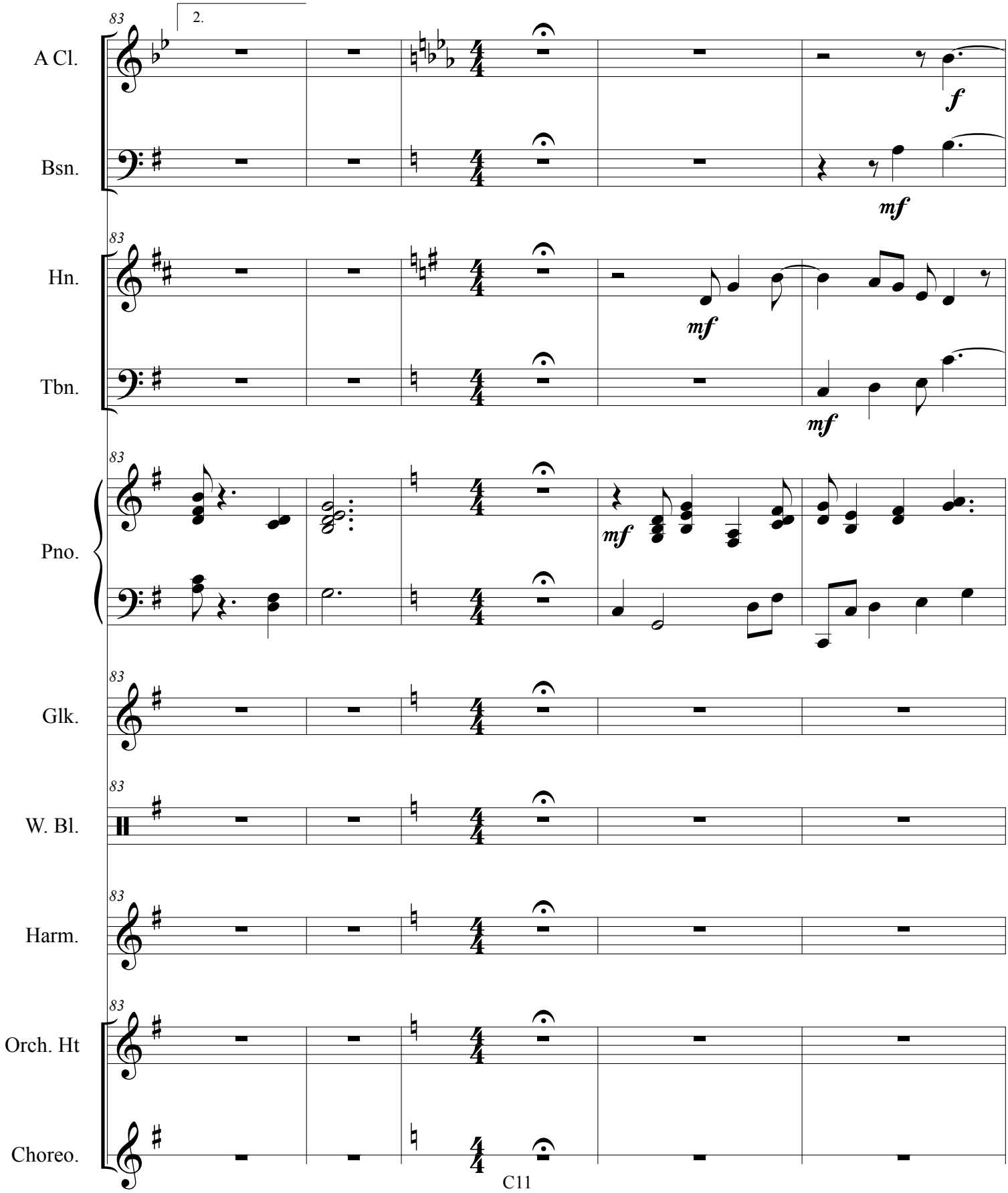
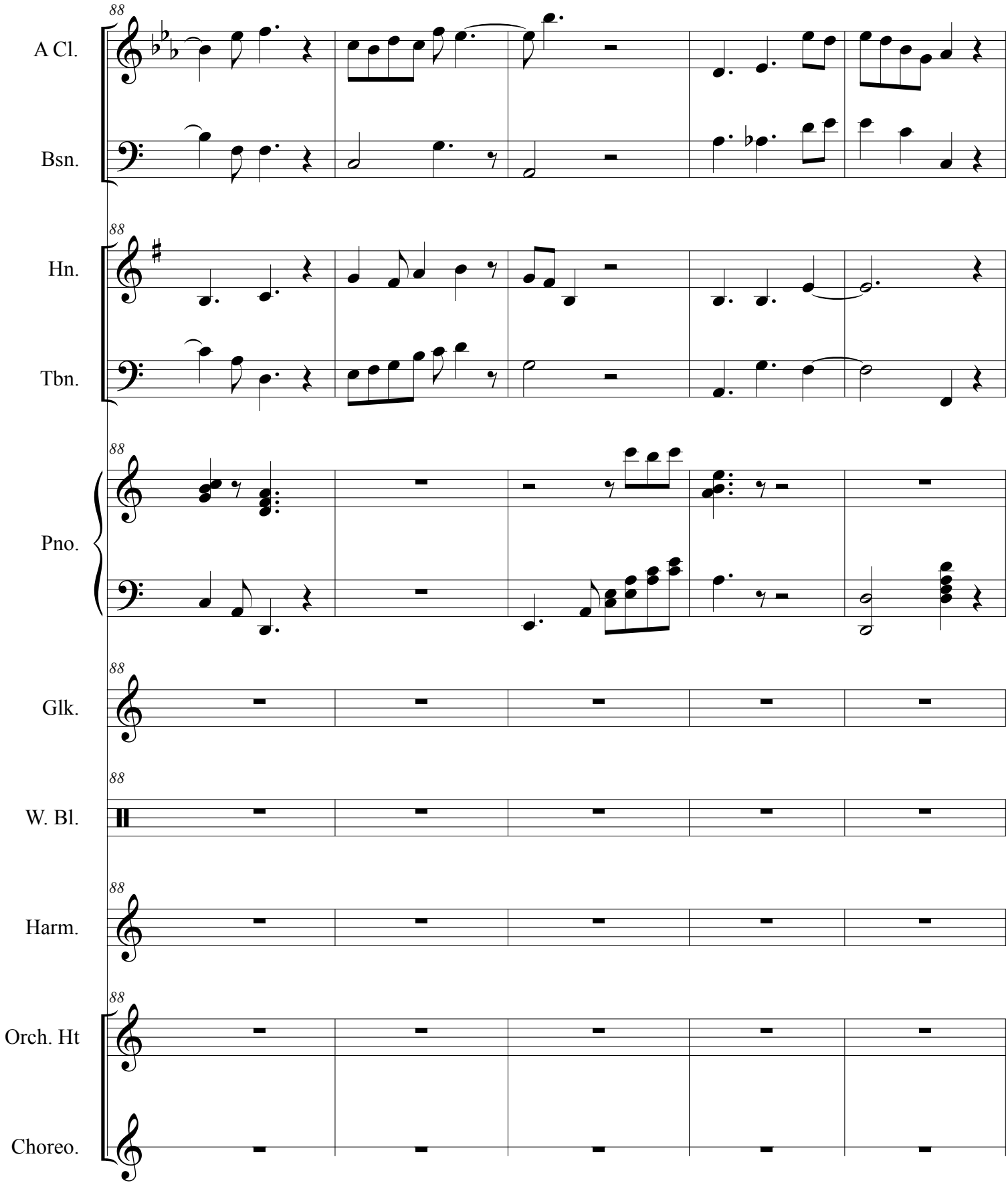
62
A Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tbn.
Pno.
ff
mf
Glk.
W. Bl.
(solo)
f
Harm.
Orch. Ht
Choreo.
C8

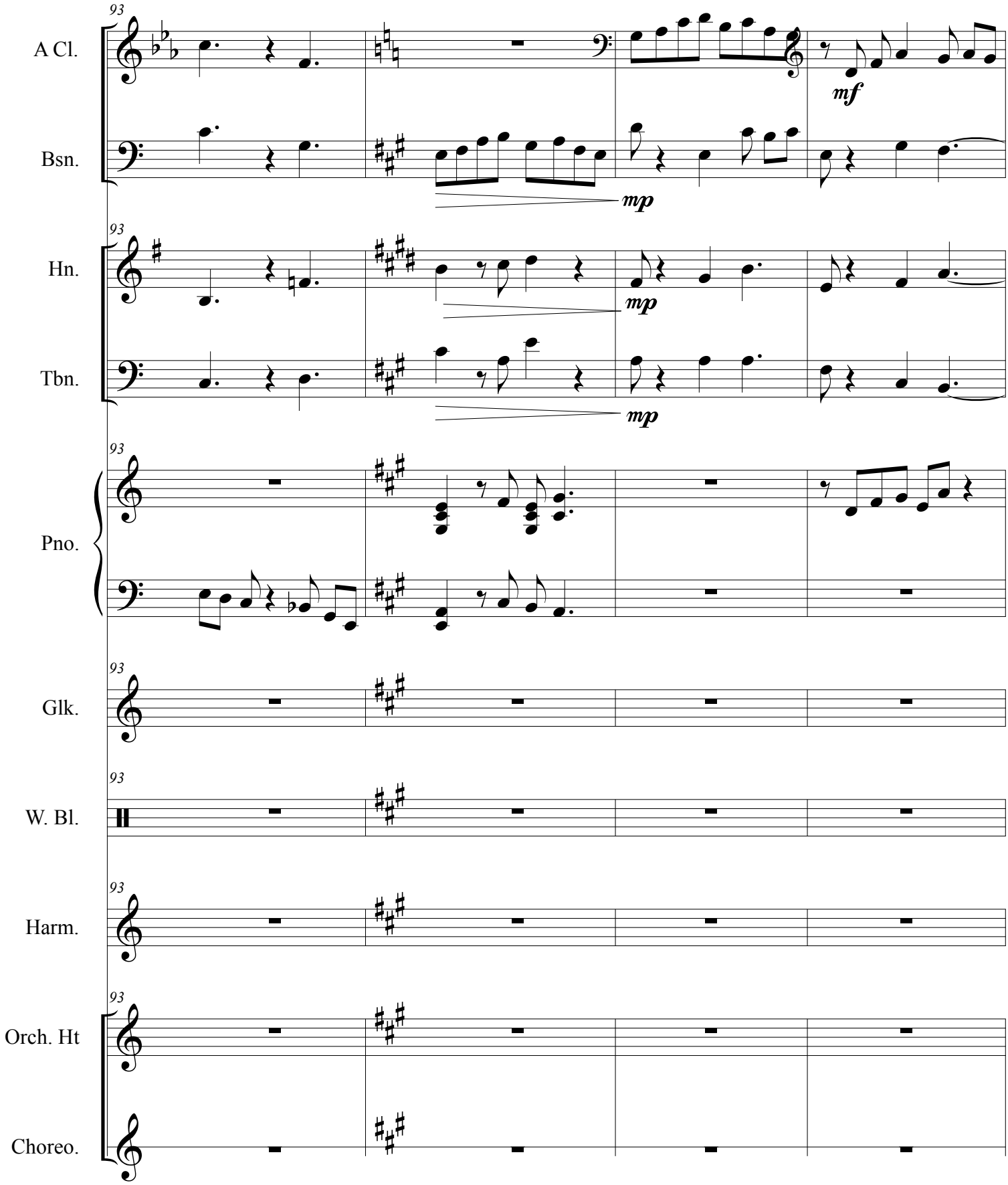

67
A Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tbn.
Pno.
Glk.
W. Bl.
ff
Harm.
Orch. Ht
Choreo.
C9
C10

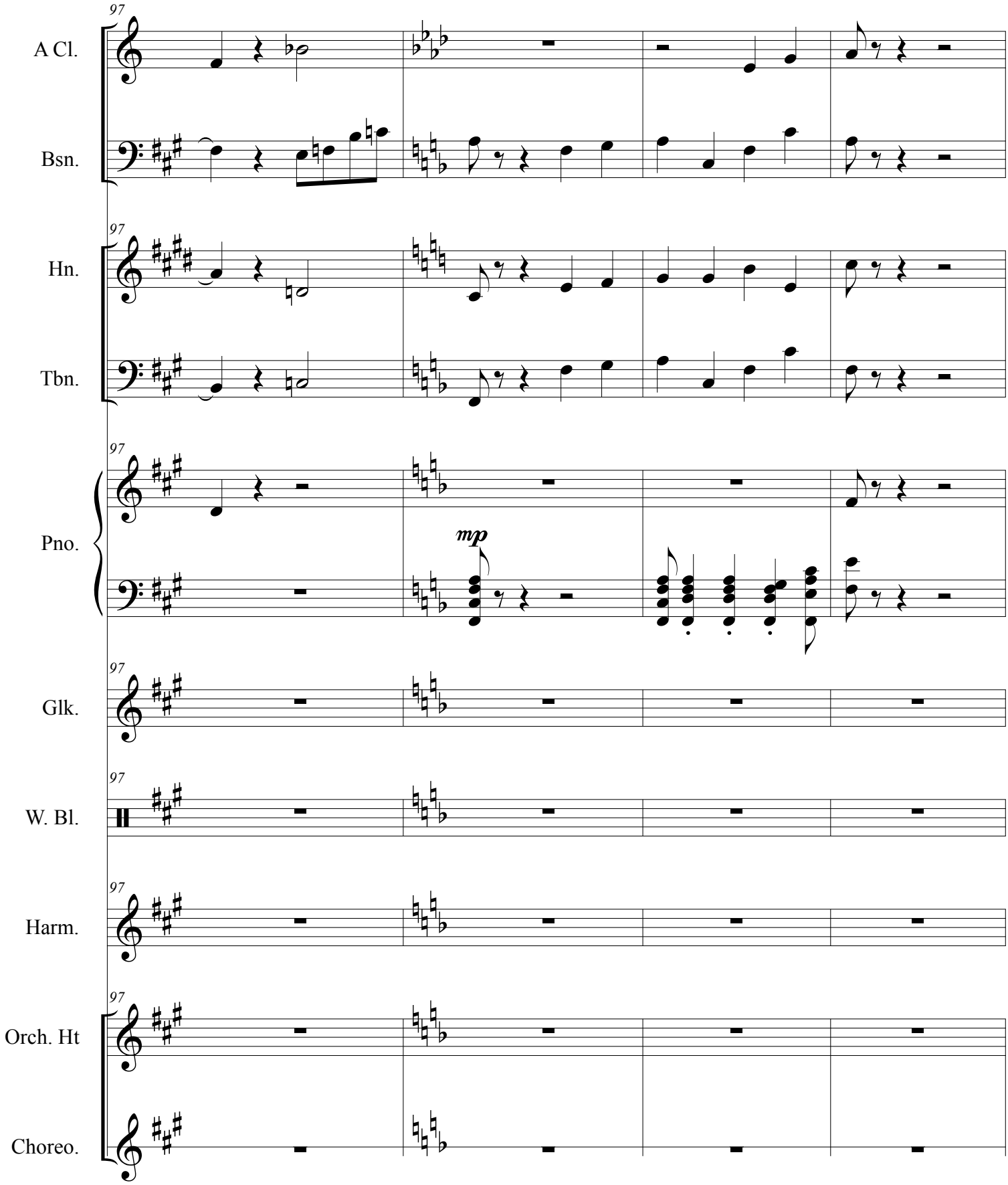

73
A Cl.
Bsn.
73
Hn.
Tbn.
73
cantabile
Pno.
73
Glk.
73
W. Bl.
73
Harm.
73
Orch. Ht
Choreo.


79
1.
A Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tbn.
Pno.
Glk.
W. Bl.
Harm.
Orch. Ht
Choreo.


83
2.
A Cl.
Bsn.
f
mf
Hn.
Tbn.
mf
mf
Pno.
mf
Glk.
W. Bl.
Harm.
Orch. Ht
Choreo.


88
A Cl.
Bsn.
88
Hn.
Tbn.
88
Pno.
88
Glk.
88
W. Bl.
88
Harm.
88
Orch. Ht
Choreo.


93
A Cl.
Bsn.
mf
mp
93
Hn.
Tbn.
mp
mp
93
Pno.
93
Glk.
93
W. Bl.
93
Harm.
93
Orch. Ht
Choreo.


97
A Cl.
Bsn.
97
Hn.
Tbn.
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Pno.
mp
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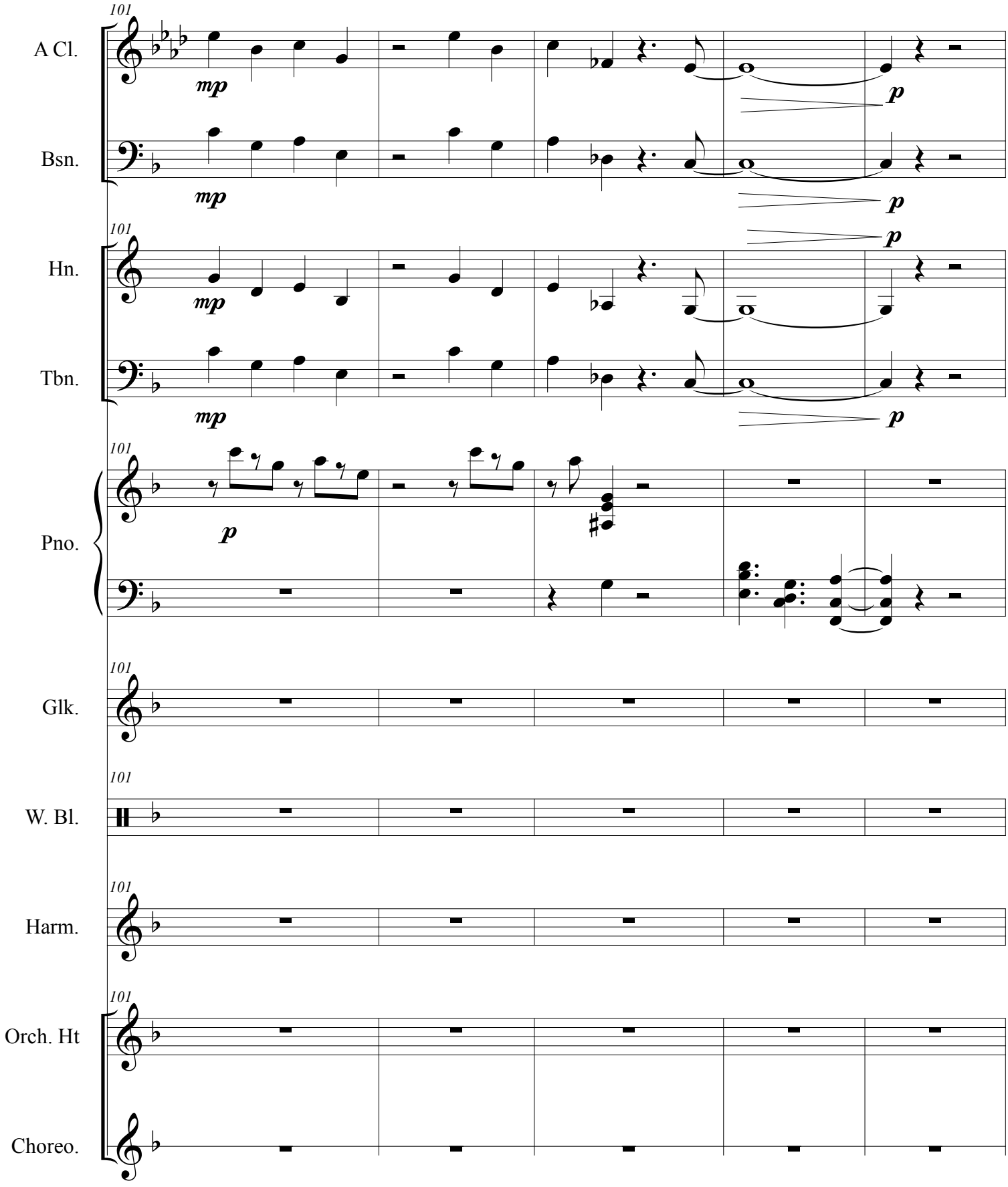
W. Bl.
97
Harm.
97
Orch. Ht
Choreo.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Hn.
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Glk.
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Harm.
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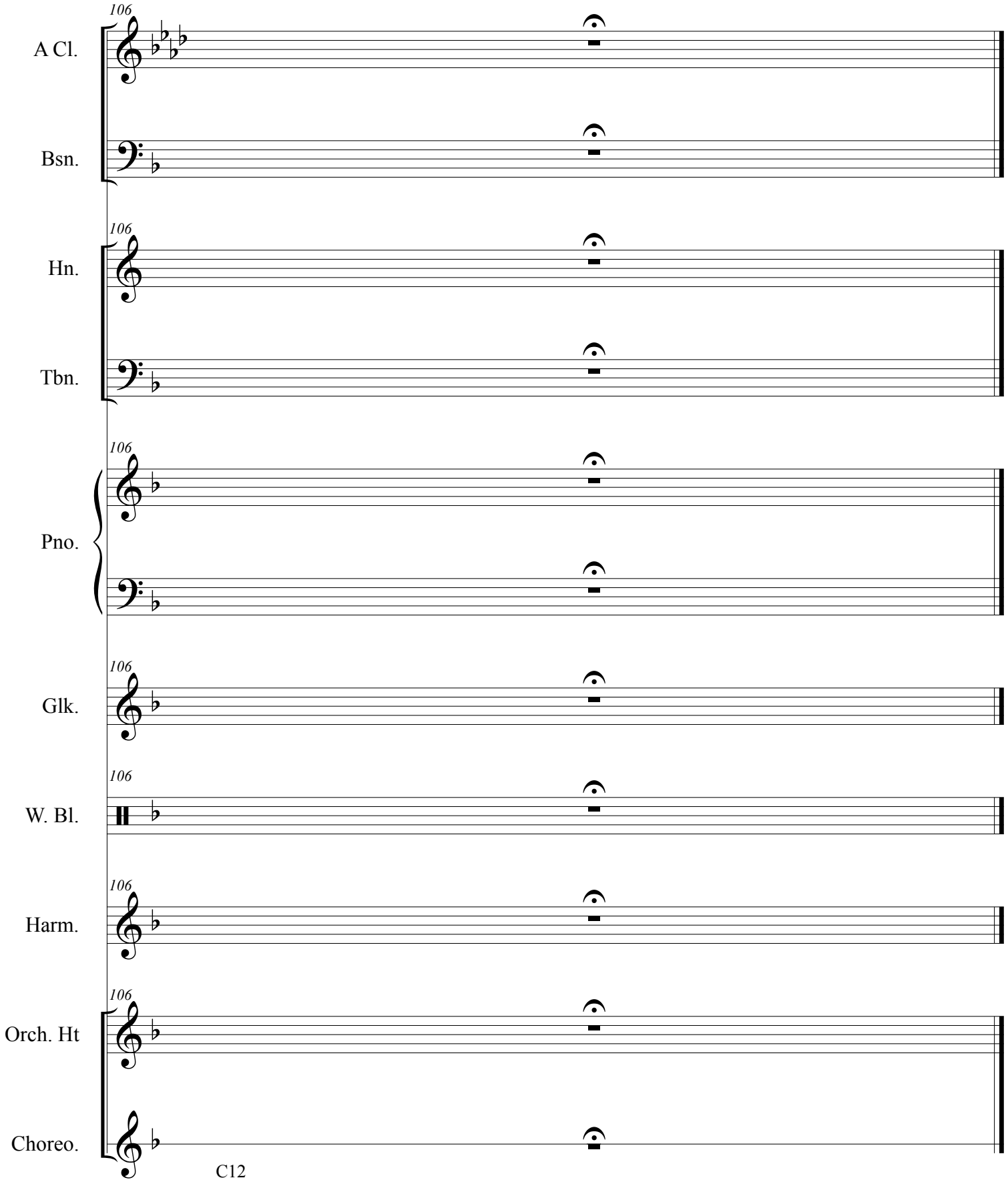
Orch. Ht
Choreo.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Pno.
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Glk.
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W. Bl.
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Harm.
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Orch. Ht
Choreo.