GLANERT

Hidden Image: Contrafactum with Brahms





Learning & Engagement STAGES 5 & 6

Verxierbild (Hidden Image: Contrafactum with Brahms) by Detlev Glanert

Stage 5 & 6 Teaching Resource

Sydney Symphony Orchestra

Acknowledgements

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The Sydney Symphony Orchestra would like to express its gratitude to the following for their generous support of the Learning & Engagement program and the production of this resource kit:

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"Your life can be changed and enriched through all sorts of music; music from now, music from the past, music from the very distant past and music from as recently as yesterday.

Through intensive listening students become involved in one of the highest orders of thinking.

As a teacher, by bringing students to a concert and studying music in the classroom, you are providing your students with a special pathway to musical knowledge through direct experience of and contact with live music."

Richard Gill AO

(1941-2018)

Conductor, notable educator and advocate. Richard was the founding Artistic Director of Education at the Sydney Symphony. He has inspired generation of musicians through his work and continues to inspire new generations through his legacy.

Syllabus Links

NSW Curriculum

Verxierbild (Hidden Image: Contrafactum with Brahms) by Detlev Glanert covers a range of topics from the NSW syllabuses:

Years 7-10 Elective

An Instrument and Its Repertoire
Art Music of the 20th and 21st Centuries
Music for Large Ensembles

Music 1 Preliminary and HSC

Music of the 20th and 21st Centuries Music for Large Ensembles

Music 2 HSC

MANDATORY TOPIC Music of the Past 25 Years (Australian Focus)

Syllabus Outcomes

The activities included in this kit cover a range of outcomes across the NSW Music Syllabus stages, as mapped below:

Stage 4 and Stage 5 Elective Music

Activities	Syllabus Outcomes	Ideas for assessment
	4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9	Written responses
Activity 1:	5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 5.9	Notated composition,
		Non notated composition
Activity 2:	4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.11, 4.12	Notation responses
,	5.7, 5.8, 5.9, 5.11, 5.12	Short written responses
Activity 3:	4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.11, 4.12	0 1
	5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.11, 5.12	Group performance
	4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9	Written responses
Activity 4:	5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 5.9	Notated composition,
·	0.4, 0.0, 0.0, 0.7, 0.0, 0.0	Non notated composition
		Critical discussion
Activity 5:	4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.11, 4.12	5
	5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.11, 5.12	Duet performance
Activity 5:	P1, P9, P10	
	H1, H9, H10	Duet performance

Stage 6 Music 1

Activities	Syllabus Outcomes	Ideas for assessment
Activity 1:	P2, P3, P7 H2, H3, H7	Written responses Notated composition, Non notated composition
Activity 2:	P2, P4, P5 H2, H4, H5	Notation responses Short written responses
Activity 3:	P1, P9, P10 H1, H9, H10	Group performance
Activity 4:	P2, P3, P4, P5, P7 H2, P3, H4, H5, P7	Written responses Notated composition, Non notated composition Critical discussion

Stage 6 Music 2

Activities	Syllabus Outcomes	Ideas for assessment
Activity 1:	P2, P3, P7 H2, H3, H7	Written responses Notated composition, Non notated composition
Activity 2:	P2, P4, P5 H2, H4, H5	Notation responses Short written responses
Activity 3:	P1, P9, P10 H1, H9, H10	Group performance
Activity 4:	P2, P3, P4, P5, P7 H2, P3, H4, H5, P7	Written responses Notated composition, Non notated composition Critical discussion
Activity 5:	P1, P9, P10 H1, H9, H10	Duet performance

Work: Verxierbild (Hidden Image: Contrafactum with Brahms) by Detlev Glanert

Composer Background

Detlev Glanert (b. 1960)

Detlev Glanert is a prominent German composer, celebrated for his contributions to contemporary classical music, particularly in opera and orchestral works. Born on September 6, 1960, in Hamburg, Germany, Glanert studied composition with noted figures such as Diether de la Motte, Günther Friedrichs, and Hans Werner Henze, whose mentorship had a significant impact on his musical voice. Glanert's style blends a modern sensibility with echoes of late-Romantic and early 20th-century traditions, often infusing his works with rich orchestration and expressive depth. His early successes include pieces such as *Leyla und Medjnun* and *The Mirror of the Great Emperor*, which established him as a composer of keen dramatic insight and lyrical intensity.

Glanert's reputation is particularly strong in the realm of opera, where his works, including *Caligula* (2006) and *Oceane* (2019), are lauded for their psychological depth and theatrical power. Beyond opera, his orchestral and chamber compositions, such as Concertgeblaas and Theatrum Bestiarum, showcase his skill in crafting vivid textures and exploring profound themes. He has received numerous accolades, including the prestigious Rolf Liebermann Prize for Opera and the Bavarian Theatre Prize. As a prolific composer and a passionate advocate for the arts, Glanert continues to be a vital force in the contemporary music scene, with his works performed in major venues across the world.

Work Background

Verxierbild (Hidden Image: Contrafactum with Brahms) (2023)

The work is a companion piece to Brahms' Symphony No. 3. Brahms has long been a major source of inspiration for Glanert. *Vexierbild* is the latest in a series of companion pieces to Brahms' four symphonies, following *Brahms-Fantasie* (2011-12), *Weites Land* (*Open Land*) (2013), and *Idyllium* (2018-19), which were written as companion pieces to the first, fourth, and second symphonies, respectively. *Vexierbild*, or *Hidden Image*, depicts the mystery surrounding Brahms' Symphony No. 3. Glanert states, "It came out of nowhere; nobody has any information about when he started it or was even thinking about it." The subtitle *Contrafactum with Brahms* references creating new music from old. While heavily influenced by Brahms, Glanert avoids direct quotations in his work, instead focusing on Brahmsian gestures, figures, motifs, and structural qualities. Glanert's inspiration is drawn from Brahms's "ideas and his inner material, but it's my own Brahms," he states.

https://www.boosey.com/cr/music/Detlev-Glanert-Vexierbild-Kontrafaktur-mit-Brahms/111210

Instrumentation of Work

Woodwind	Brass	Percussion	Strings
2 Flutes	4 Horns in F	Timpani	Violin I
2 Oboes	2 Trumpets		Violin II
2 Clarinets	3 Trombones		Viola
2 Bassoons			Cello
Contrabassoon			Double Bass

Listening Guide

Overview

Verxierbild (Hidden Image: Contrafactum with Brahms) is, broadly speaking, in an ABAC structure. The A music is lively, fast and vigorous. The B music is slower and more lyrical. The C music forms a very quiet and reflective coda in a slow tempo. There are structural aspects of this work at both a micro and macro level that reflect Brahms' approach to large symphonic structures. The musical language has references to Brahms, but it is very much a contemporary style. This is not a pastiche of Brahms' Third Symphony; rather it is a composition inspired by that symphony. The work is in a single movement and lasts about 15 minutes.

More Detailed Guide

The piece begins with emphatic F to A flat in the bass instruments (a minor third) which becomes an important interval throughout the work. In this introductory passage, fragmented melodies are presented before the full orchestra has a perpetually moving figure.

There then follows a theme on oboe and flute which leads to a very dense and rhythmic passage which sees the introduction of an important theme at letter **C**.



This theme in the introductory material is then developed by the full orchestra.

Just before letter **G** the cellos and basses introduce a theme which is based on the inversion of the first theme.



At letter I, a syncopated accompaniment figure in the violins and violas accompanies a new theme in the woodwinds. This is subsequently developed; and at letter K a new theme is introduced by brass instruments.

The syncopated accompaniment continues and builds to a very loud tutti, reaching a climax with a timpani solo. The music then recedes to a quiet and much slower passage beginning at letter **N** (the B music). The flute and clarinet have antiphonal solos through here which are subsequently taken up by first horn. At letter **P** the clarinet introduces a new simple and plaintive melody.



The slow music continues as the texture thickens and the dynamics get louder. It reaches a climax after letter **S** with the lyrical theme presented in the violins, flutes and oboes before the texture and dynamics recede and a *pianissimo* clarinet solo leads to letter **T**.

This is a recapitulation (second A). The introductory material is presented again and, after a while, in a thinner texture. At letter **U**, a new rather martial theme is introduced. Then there is a second recapitulation of the introductory material with a new, more thinly textured, version of the opening theme presented. Once more, this is a reflection of Brahms' approach to structure and musical architecture with a type of double recapitulation.

The texture thins out at letter **X** with flutes and oboes playing a rather disjunct melody in antiphony with the violins. This antiphonal idea continues after letter **Y** when the first clarinet and first bassoon have an antiphonal exchange of melodic ideas. Several of the subsequent passages are marked *agitato* alternating with *come prima* (as the beginning). This is a larger reflection of the antiphonal idea.

At letter **BB**, the music becomes gradually a little faster and builds to a climax at **DD** with the whole orchestra playing loudly and in a faster tempo. This quickly recedes and at letter **EE**, there is a very still, calm and quiet coda which starts with a clarinet solo. This is subsequently taken up by flute then first violin muted and viola muted, leading to the final string chords involving very high harmonics which bring this piece to an end.

Additional Media Resources

Below is a curated selection of additional third-party media resources teachers might choose to use in supporting their students to engage in concert preparation:

https://www.boosey.com/cr/news/Detlev-Glanert-s- Vexierbild -Premieres-at-Grand-Teton-Music-Festival/102441&LangID=1

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Detlev_Glanert

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kRKABnqhGX8&ab_channel=Boosey%26Hawkes

Audio Excerpts

https://boosey.disco.ac/track-new/128001524/play?stream_only=1&user_id=1392732&signature=sXIHhZGrntca94xpSl7kEgZppC0%3AXe7TffpX

(entire work)

Excerpt No.	Bar No.	Time	Activity	Page
1	96 - 116	3'14" - 3'50"	Activity 1, Task 1	12
2	130 - 145	4'25" - 6'01"	Activity 2, Task 1	13
3	146 - 151	6'01" - 6'22"	Activity 2, Task 2	13
4	259 - 280	11'03" - 11'40"	Activity 4, Task 1	15

Score Excerpts

Excerpt	Section	Bars	Activity	Page
1		130 -145	Activity 2, Task 1	33
2		259 - 280	Activity 4, Task 1	36

Learning Activities

Activity 1: Listening and Composition

Task 1

Listen to **Audio Excerpt 1** FOUR times and answer the following question:

How does the composer achieve a sense of climax in this excerpt? Refer to at least three elements of music.

Task 2

Verxierbild (Hidden Image: Contrafactum with Brahms) was inspired by the music of Johannes Brahms, particularly the Third Symphony. However, Glanert does not quote Brahms directly, nor could the music be said to be an imitation of Brahms' style.

- Consider a piece of music that inspires you. Use it as the starting point for a composition but do not quote it.
- Consider how you could compose a piece of music inspired by another piece of music.
- What compositional devices would you use and why?
- What would be your performing media?
- In which ways would your original composition by connected to the work that inspired it?
- If you don't complete this composition project, keep your notes and sketches from this planning and thinking process in your composition portfolio.

Activity 2: Aural Skills and Musicology

Task 1

Listen to bars 130 -145 **Audio Excerpt 2** (4'25"-6'01") FOUR times and refer to **Score Excerpt 1**

1. Explain the following notations:

gli altri	Violin 1, bar 130	
sul tasto	Contrabass, bar 134	
Div.	Violas, bar 130	
	Violin 1 solo, bar 132	

- 2. How do the second violins and violas contribute to the music's texture and harmony?
- 3. Discuss Glanert's use of tone colour in this excerpt.

Task 2

Listen to bars 146-151 Audio Excerpt 3 (6'01"- 6'22") SIX times.

Notate the clarinet melody (concert pitch). Some notes are given.



Activity 3: Performance

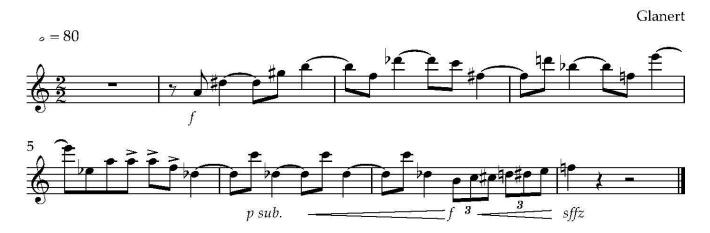
Perform the classroom arrangement of part of *Verxierbild (Hidden Image: Contrafactum with Brahms)*



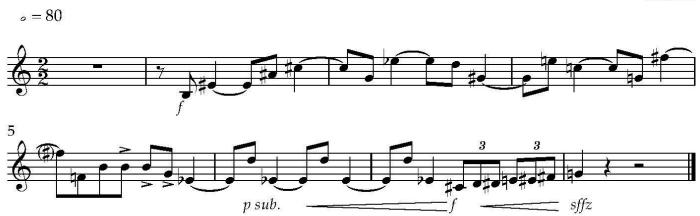




Part 1



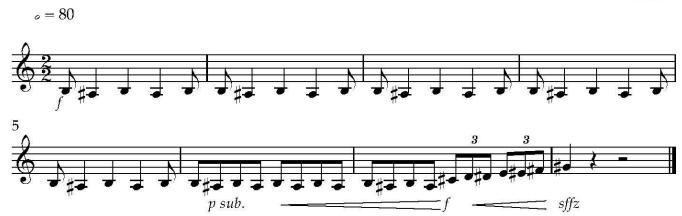
Part 1 in B



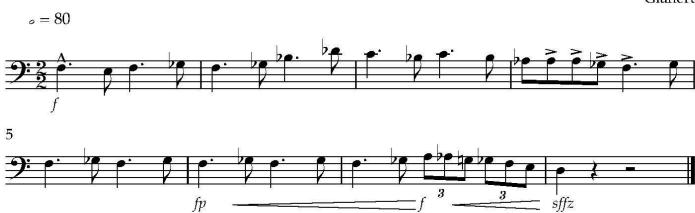
Part 2



Part 2 in B



Part 3



Piano



Activity 4: Listening and Composition and Musicology Task 1

Listen to bars 259 - 280 of *Verxierbild (Hidden Image: Contrafactum with Brahms).* **Audio Excerpt 4** (11'03"-11'40") and refer to **Score Excerpt 2.**

How does the composer use antiphony in this excerpt?

Task 2

Compose a piece for two instruments that employs antiphony in a variety of ways. You may wish to consider using some of the techniques Glanert uses in this excerpt, such as overlapping entries, inversion of themes and alternating tempi. You may also wish to consider other antiphonal techniques such as modifying answering phrases by transposition or in retrograde.

Extension:

- 1. Consider composing an antiphonal piece for a single instrument. How could you use a delay pedal to achieve that?
- 2. Consider composing an antiphonal piece for a larger chamber group (4-8 instruments).
- 3. Devise a matrix that could outline possible antiphonal relationships. How can these relationships be realised musically?

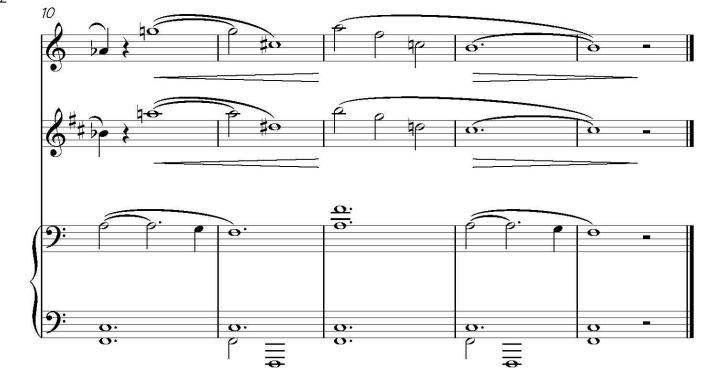
Task 3

Research antiphonal music and listen critically to examples. You may wish to consider musical styles and genres with which you are unfamiliar. These could include work songs from West Africa, monastic music from mediaeval Europe or military jody calls. Write a critical reflection on the apparent purpose of this antiphony, and on its effectiveness.

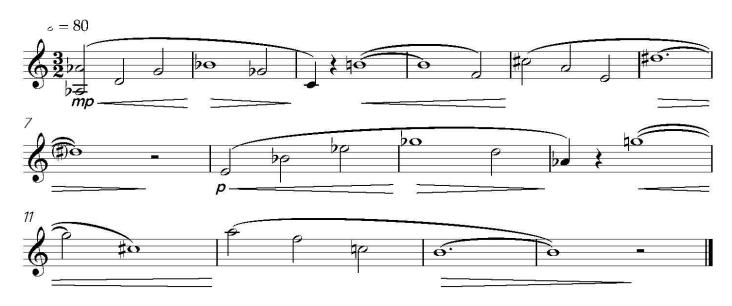
Activity 5: Performance

Refer to the arrangement of bars 321 – 334.

Form pairs with one person to play the melody line and the other to play the accompaniment. Exchange roles and play it again.

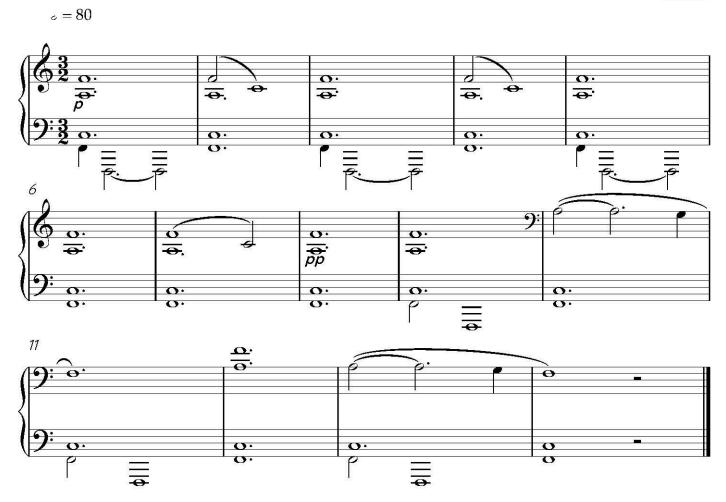


Melody

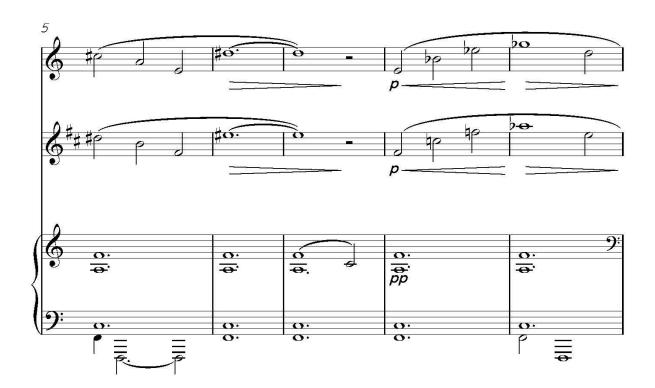


Melody in Bb

Piano







Suggested Answers

Activity 1: Listening and Composition

Task 1

Listen to Audio Excerpt 1 FOUR times and answer the following question:

How does the composer achieve a sense of climax in this excerpt? Refer to at least three elements of music.

Answers may include:

- Thick texture becoming thicker
- Loud dynamics becoming louder
- Instruments tending to play in their strongest registers
- Use of very high notes in violins and flutes
- Dramatic trombone glissandi
- At the end of the excerpt, the emphatic tutti chords
- Addition of timpani solo at the end of the excerpt

Activity 2: Aural Skills and Musicology

Task 1

Listen to bars 130 - 145 **Audio Excerpt 2** (4'25" - 6'01") FOUR TIMES and refer to the score. **Score Excerpt 1**

1. Explain the following notations:

gli altri	Violin 1, bar 130	'The others' i.e. those 1st violins other than the one playing solo.
sul tasto	Contrabass, bar 134	Bow near the fingerboard to modify the tone colour.
Div.	Violas, bar 130	Violas divide with half playing the higher notes and half playing the lower notes.
	Violin 1 solo, bar 132	Artificial harmonic. Violinist holds down Bb on the fourth string, then touches the same string lightly where Eb is to be found. The resultant note has a shimmering, glassy quality and sounds at the Bb above the staff.

2. How do the second violins and violas contribute to the music's texture and harmony?

These instruments play a syncopated rhythm which seldom varies. This holds the rest of the rather sparse musical texture together. The instruments play four-note chords in the register immediately below middle C. These chords are quite dissonant and are often based on superimposed pairs of minor thirds.

3. Discuss Glanert's use of tone colour in this excerpt.

Answers may include:

- Use of pure colours for solos e.g. horn.
- Use of the fairly neutral tone of 2nd violins and violas in low register as accompaniment.
- Some extended techniques such as harmonics and sul tasto.
- Accompaniment figure moves to clarinets and bassoons in bar 138 for a change in tone colour.
- Antiphonal solos from oboe and bassoon at the end of the excerpt makes a feature of double reed tone colours.

Task 2

Verxierbild (Hidden Image: Contrafactum with Brahms)

Listen to bars 146 - 151 Audio Excerpt 3 (6'01"- 6'22") SIX TIMES.

Notate the clarinet melody (concert pitch). Some notes are given.



Activity 3: Performance

Perform the classroom arrangement of part of Verxierbild (Hidden Image: Contrafactum with Brahms)

Activity 4: Listening and Composition and Musicology

Task 1

Listen to bars 259 - 280 of *Verxierbild (Hidden Image: Contrafactum with Brahms)*. **Audio Excerpt 4** (11'03" - 11'40") and refer to **Score Excerpt 2**.

How does the composer use ANTIPHONY in this excerpt?

Answers may include:

At first, clarinet and bassoon alternate a figure (bassoon in inversion).

- Upper and lower strings have a call and response accompaniment at first.
- At bar 266, the roles are reversed and the woodwind have the call and response accompaniment while the strings have a theme with antiphonal movement (that is to say, the lower and upper strings move at different times).
- More broadly, the alternation between *agitato* and *come prima* could be seen as structural antiphony.

Task 2

Compose a piece for two instruments that employs antiphony in a variety of ways. You may wish to consider using some of the techniques Glanert uses in this excerpt, such as overlapping entries, inversion of themes and alternating tempi. You may also wish to consider other antiphonal techniques such as modifying answering phrases by transposition or in retrograde.

Extension:

- Consider composing an antiphonal piece for a single instrument. How could you use a delay pedal to achieve that?
- Consider composing an antiphonal piece for a larger chamber group (4 8 instruments). Devise a matrix that could outline possible antiphonal relationships. How can these relationships be realised musically?

Task 3

Research antiphonal music and listen critically to examples. You may wish to consider musical styles and genres with which you are unfamiliar. These could include work songs from West Africa, liturgical music from mediaeval Europe or military jody calls. Write a critical reflection on the apparent purpose of this antiphony, and on its effectiveness.

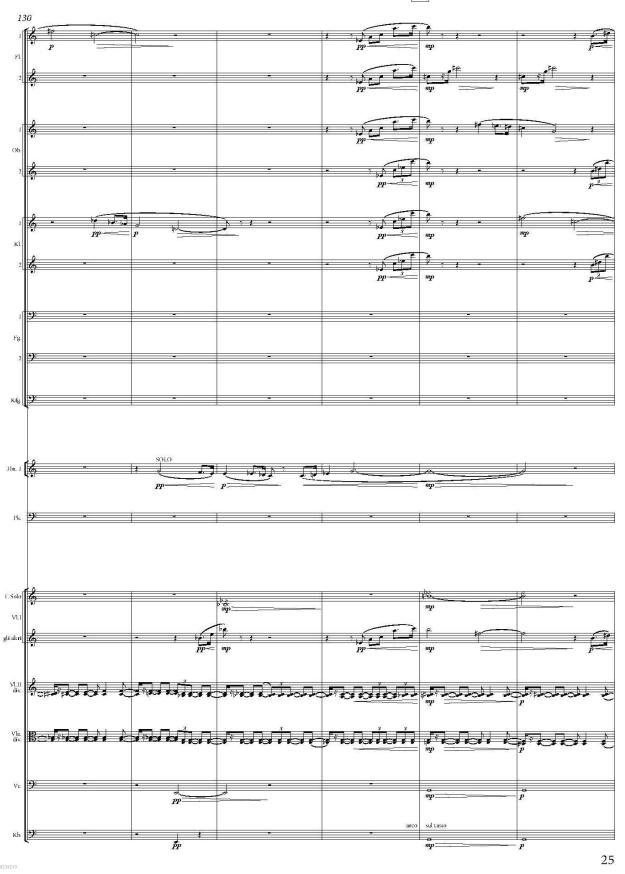
Activity 5: Performance

Refer to the arrangement of bars 321 - 334

Form pairs with one person to play the melody line and the other to play the accompaniment. Exchange roles and play it again.

Score Excerpt 1

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26

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27

Score Excerpt 2

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