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AN ORCHESTRATION OF CHARLES-MARIE WIDOR'S ROMANCE (FROM SUITE FOR FLUTE AND PIANO, OP. 34)

by

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Introduction:

I first heard Charles-Marie Widor's *Suite for Flute and Piano*, Op. 34, while turning pages for my father as he accompanied Tadeo Coelho in a solo performance of the piece. As Coelho played the *Romance* each note spun out of the flute and into my ears, creating one of my most memorable musical experiences. The combination of the piano and flute timbres twisted together and formed a rich, beautiful sound. When it came time for me to choose the work I would orchestrate, a work originally written for flute and piano at the turn of the 20th Century, this movement immediately came to mind. I remembered the abundance of color in that specific performance and felt that Widor's flute melodies might be enhanced by the colors and timbres of an orchestral accompaniment.

1. MOTIVATION FOR CHOOSING WIDOR'S ROMANCE

1.1 Some possible explanations for the lack of music composed for solo flute and orchestra at the turn of the 20th Century.

There were a remarkably small number of works composed for solo flute and orchestra at the turn of the 20th Century¹. Works that appear in David Daniels' *Orchestral Music: A Handbook* for this time period include the following (Daniels 450-451):

• Originally for flute and orchestra

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921) *Romance*, Op. 37 and *Odelette*, Op. 162
Cecile Chaminade (1857-1944) *Concertino*, Op. 107, for flute and orchestra
Ferruccio Busoni (1866-1924) *Divertimento*, Op. 52, for flute and chamber orchestra

Ernest Bloch (1880-1959) Suite Modale

Charles Tomlinson Griffes (1884-1920) Poem for flute and orchestra

Carl Nielsen (1865-1931) Concerto

• Originally for flute and piano and later orchestrated

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924) *Fantaisie*, Op. 79 (orch. by Louis Aubert, 1957) Frederick Delius (1862-1934) *Air and Dance* (orch. by Eric Fenby) Frank Martin (1890-1974) *Ballade* (orch. by the composer)

¹ Turn of the 20th Century refers to the years between 1890-1920

1.1a The Development of the Flute

Discrepancies in opinion about which kind of flute was best occurred as the design of the flute developed. Theobald Boehm (1794-1881), flutist, flute maker, and goldsmith, experimented with the design of the flute early in the 19th Century. By 1847 Boehm had revised his first models of the flute which regulated the spacing of keys, enlarged the tone holes, and used ring keys to produce an even tone and better intonation. In addition to these first modifications, Boehm's flutes were now made out of silver as opposed to wood with metal keys, the embouchure-hole was rectangular with rounded corners, and the present form of the B-flat thumb key was introduced (Montagu et al., sec II., 4., (iii)). French flutists, especially those who studied with Louis Dorus (1813-1896) and later Paul Taffanel (1844-1908) at the Paris Conservatory were encouraged to play on Boehm flutes (Dorgeuille 14). German flutists, however, were not as willing to trade in their flutes made in the older designs which they claimed had a wider variety of tone colors (Montagu et al., sec II., 4., (iii)). Yet composers such as Wagner, Brahms, Mahler, and Strauss were composing symphonies that demanded more presence from the instrument, so Heinrich Friedrich Meyer (1814-1897) designed a wooden flute that produced a louder sound with the capabilities of playing in the extreme higher and lower ranges of the instrument (Powell). According to Montagu et al., "By the late 19th Century,

national preferences had given way to personal ones. Some players remained true to their first flutes while others switched to new models...Many hybrid instruments, combining features of both the Boehm flute and old conical flutes developed" (Montagu, et al. sec II., 4., (iii)). With so many different kinds of flutes in use, composers could not anticipate a specific timbre, volume, or technical capability unless they were writing for a specific design of the instrument. Therefore, it is possible that composers did not write pieces for solo flute and orchestra because the chance that their piece would receive widespread performance was hindered by the abundance of flute designs in use.

1.1b Abundance of compositions for flute in the early 19th Century

In his book, *The French Flute School 1860-1950*, Dorgeuille suggests that one reason for the lack of solo flute repertoire at the turn of the 20th Century might have been the result of salon music's immense popularity in the early 19th Century: "But it is hard to explain why contemporary composers who were often [Taffanel's] friends – Saint-Saëns, for example – wrote so little for the flute, despite [his] prestige. We can only conclude that the excesses of earlier in the century harmed the flute much more than we may have imagined" (Dorgeuille 41). As defined in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Music*, salon music is a "term applied, often pejoratively, to music of light character which aims to please rather than to be profound, suitable for performance in a salon." As the palate of available colors expanded due to developments in individual instrument designs and additions to instrument families, many composers found their preferred medium of musical expression in the orchestra. The flutist's repertoire from this time period directly reflects this focus on orchestral composition. Raymond Meylan, in his book, *The Flute*, describes this change as it pertains to the flute: "In this period the flute and flautists seem to have developed more in orchestral than in virtuoso music. Through its contact with the great works of the repertoire the flute flourished, as did every other orchestral instrument. The Romantic style does not single it out for special attention, and it is one of the voices in an organic whole" (Meylan 118).

1.1d Demand for new chamber works from Taffanel

Paul Taffanel is regarded by many as the most influential flutist of the French School at the turn of the 20th Century. Thus, his focus on the performance of chamber music, especially music that featured the flute, may also have contributed to the lack of solo flute literature, since composers that might have composed solos for him instead were commissioned to write pieces for him to premiere at his chamber music concerts. Indeed Taffanel created numerous opportunities for chamber pieces to be performed. He founded the *Société* *Classique* in 1872 and later the *Société de Musique de Chambre pour Instruments* à *Vent*, the latter giving concerts around six times a year until 1893 (Dorgeuille 13). Widor, on the other hand, did compose a solo work for Taffanel in the *Suite*, Op. 34, for flute and piano. It was performed along with other chamber works of varying instrumentations at one of these chamber music concerts (Dorgeuille 21). Taffanel also reintroduced many older solo pieces back into the flute repertoire; "The credit must go to Taffanel for purifying the solo flute repertoire.

Masterpieces long neglected by his predecessors – who showed an incredible lack of taste – were revived and restored to their rightful place. The Bach Sonatas, Mozart Concerti, and in general all the riches of the flute repertoire were virtually unknown until Taffanel brought them to light" (Fleury qtd. in Dorgeuille 16).

1.2 Widor's manual on instrumentation

A small insight into Widor's personal preferences and orchestration tendencies is available through his *Manual of Practical Instrumentation*. Not only does he provide the ranges of each instrument found in the orchestra, but also clear explanations of concepts such as string harmonics. Additionally, he includes some of his own subjective observations, such as "The horn and clarinet in unison are exquisite." which he wrote in reference to an excerpt from Franck's *Symphonie* (Widor 63). In orchestrating a piece by Widor, it was helpful to refer to his personal interpretation of specific instruments' roles within an orchestra.

2. AN APPROACH TO ORCHESTRATION

2.1 Chordal Reduction

One of the first steps I took in my approach to the orchestration was to map the harmonic movement, reducing each measure to a collection of vertical chords. Through this process I was able to identify the harmonic progression and areas where I would need to emphasize specific resolutions as well as establish where harmonies would need to be sustained as background support in the orchestration. A copy of the chordal reduction can be found in Appendix A.

2.2 Analysis of Form

In addition to a harmonic analysis I also analyzed the form of the movement. Repetitions of melodic material or entire sections of the music were identified and considered in the treatment of the orchestration in each individual case. For example, a different orchestration evolved through repetition of musical ideas within the B section, specifically, measures 30 and 31 in comparison to measures 38 and 39. In other instances of repeated musical material, the same orchestration was used, as seen with the return of the opening melody or A section, starting in measure 64. The analysis of form can be found in Appendix B.

2.3 Deciding on an appropriate instrumentation

In choosing the instruments I would include in my orchestration, I considered orchestrations by Widor as well as Chaminade's *Concertino* Op. 107 for flute and orchestra and Fauré's *Fantasie [sic]* Op. 79 for flute and piano (orchestrated by Louis Aubert in 1957).

2.3a A few of Widor's orchestrations

I was able to study the scores of Widor's Piano Concerto [No. 1], Op. 39 (1876), *Fantaisie* for piano and orchestra (1889), Piano Concerto No.2, Op. 77 (1905), and *Sinfonia Sacra*, Op. 81 (1908). The variety of instrumentation for the first three of these pieces follows the trend of Romantic period orchestras, steadily increasing in size. Widor achieved a larger orchestral sound by adding more brass and percussion as well as extending the woodwind sections. Ironically, the work composed latest requires the smallest orchestra. The reduced instrumentation of the *Sinfonia Sacra* shows Widor's respect for the sound and color available in a smaller symphonic ensemble.

2.3b Chaminade's Concertino Op. 107 for flute and orchestra

One of the few pieces for flute and orchestra written at the turn of the 20th Century is Cecile Chaminade's Concertino, Op. 107, written for the 1902 Paris Conservatory flute *concours* (or competition), the equivalent of end of the year exams or performance juries (Dorgeuille 72). The instrumentation is 1222-4031tympani-harp-strings.² The melodic lines given to the solo flute showcase the performer's tone and the juxtaposed flourish of notes found in the scalar passages and the cadenza display both the technical possibilities of the Boehm flute and the abilities of the flutist. The orchestration is such that the opening *dolce* melody in the flute $(m3)^3$ is accompanied by the violins and the violas allowing the flute to establish itself as the solo instrument. As the melody continues, the lower string section joins in the accompaniment (m4, m6). The woodwinds insert short statements which add contrasting colors (m7-m14), and the brass sustain harmonies *piano* or *pianissimo* which follow the phrasing of the flute line (m18, m22). The brass also help to articulate the changes in sections whether it is a change in key signature (m23) or simply a return to the original tempo (m19). In measure 33, a new melody is introduced, and again Chaminade reduces the accompaniment texture to the string section, the violins with tremolos and the

² The first four numbers refer to the numbers of woodwinds in the following order: flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon. The second four numbers correspond to the number of brass instruments starting with horn, then trumpet, trombone, and tuba. Percussion instruments are listed after as well as strings and additional instruments such as the harp.

violas and lower strings with sustained chords. She continues to include short bursts of color in the winds, but adds a new element with the harp (m37). Even though the flute is *forte*, the accompanying strings must play *pianissimo* to help the flute project the melodic line lying in its low and middle registers. The harp, however, does not have to worry about covering the flute as its contrasting timbre allows it to support the *mezzo forte* flute line. Another example of the flute remaining in the middle register begins in measure 72. Here, in addition to reducing the accompaniment texture to just the strings, Chaminade uses pizzicato, which contrasts nicely with the twists and turns of the legato flute line. The strings then return to *arco*⁴ (m76) when the flute ventures above the staff and remains in the higher register. Beginning in measure 123, Chaminade uses both the string and brass sections to sustain harmonies under the flute as it flies up and down a scale. The string section, though, rearticulates their notes with each beat while the brass players hold their one note for the duration of the harmony.

I found Chaminade's use of the harp to be the most effective of the above mentioned techniques in orchestrating the *Romance*. Widor's flute line in section B (m30) drops not only to *pianissimo*, but also to the lower register, specifically the D above middle C. The 16th notes that begin in measure two and permeate section A continue through this section as well (See Figure 1). The groups of 16th notes in section B, however, follow a different organizational pattern which, in my opinion, suggested a new color (See Figure 2).

³ The "m" abbreviates "measure."



Figure 1. Organization of 16th notes in section A (m3-4)



Figure 2. Organization of 16th notes in section B (m32-33)

The harp seemed to be the best choice as it can traverse both the treble and bass clef ranges without obscuring the flute's slower, lower and more legato melody. As the flute's melody begins to repeat (m38), I chose to change the color of the accompaniment. Instead of the harp playing the 16th notes, the bass clarinet and the clarinet pass them back and forth as the notes come into each instrument's respective range. With the repetition in the flute melody it is easier for the listener to pick it out of the texture as the clarinets provide a refreshing variation in color. The flute finally climbs back above the staff and to *forte* in measure 44 for the last two measures of the section. This increase in dynamic level allows for both the harp and the clarinets to sweep up and down the broken dominant chord

⁴ Using a bow.

of 16th notes. The sound of the harp is reminiscent of the beginning of the section, providing cohesion. At the same time, it helps transition into the string sound of the next section.

2.3c Fauré's Fantasie [sic] Op. 79, for flute and piano

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924) composed *Fantasie [sic]*, a piece for flute and piano, in 1898. It was later orchestrated by Louis Aubert in 1957 with the instrumentation, 0222-2000-strings. The original version of the piece begins in 6/8 with a simple pattern of eighth notes in the piano accompaniment. The notes change according to the harmonic progression while the rhythm creates an ostinato pattern. Measures 19 through 25 alter the pattern slightly, although not dramatically. The next section changes key and meter. In addition, the accompaniment leaves the ostinato pattern and interacts more with the flute line, interjecting melodic material such as in measures 95 and 104. Beginning in measure 117, the flute part is marked *espressivo*, and the piano accompaniment starts a new figure that expands harmonies into ascending 16th-note arpeggios. Fauré also uses block chords on the first beat of every measure as another method of accompaniment (m216).

In agreement with the sparse and basic piano accompaniment, Aubert employs a reduced orchestra including double oboes, clarinets, bassoons, and horns in addition to the strings. In his article on Fauré, Jean-Michel Nectoux

implies that the resources of a large orchestra did not suit Fauré's musical temperament: "He had a horror of vivid colours and effects, and showed little interest in combinations of tone-colours, which he thought were too commonly a form of self-indulgence and a disguise for the absence of ideas." Aubert begins the piece by placing each note of the piano's chord in a single corresponding string section. (For instance, the top note of the chord, E is found in the first violins.) He even waits to add the string bass, which plays an octave lower than written, into the texture until Fauré consistently adds the lower octave doubling in the left hand of the piano (m9). The first deviation from the piano score is also the first entrance of a non-string instrument as a single horn supports the flute's melody in measure 15 with a somewhat static line. A single clarinet enters the entirely string texture in measure 29 with a truncated repetition of the earlier horn line. In measure 26, Fauré indicates that the pianist should use the pedal to sustain the notes, changing every three eighth notes. To accommodate the effect the pedal has on the duration of the piano's sound, Aubert changed the eighth notes to quarter notes in the orchestral parts. Similarly, Aubert transfers Fauré's staccato articulation in measure 40 into the orchestra as pizzicato in the strings and staccato in the oboe and clarinet.

The absence of the flute following the fermata at the end of measure 39 allows Aubert to incorporate more instruments into the orchestration. In fact, he takes the liberty of adding 16th-note runs that start in the bassoon in measure 46 and continue up through the clarinet and into the oboe even before Fauré begins

the 16th-note arpeggios in measure 53. In addition to the 16th-note runs, Aubert retains the eighth notes originally in the piano accompaniment by placing them in the strings. Instead of maintaining the 16th notes in measure 53, Aubert converts them into single tremolos on arpeggiated eighth notes in the strings. The pulse thus remains with the 16th note and the notes outline the same chords. Each section (violin I, II and viola), however, starts on a different note of the arpeggio creating vertical chords as well as arpeggiated chords.



Figure 3. Original 16th-note passage in Fauré's Fantasie [sic] (m53)

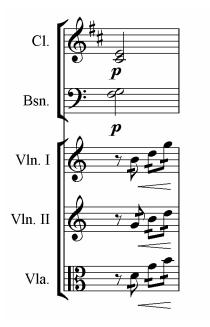


Figure 4. Tremolo passage in Aubert's orchestration (m53)

Beginning in measure 66, the bassoon and horn parts reinforce the bass notes, while the oboe and clarinet follow the piano's treble lines or add new lines that incorporate the notes of the treble parts. In contrast, the strings provide the rhythmic and harmonic patterns more directly from the piano accompaniment. In a few cases, though, the strings simply provide the harmonies through tremolos (mm72-73 and 77-79). In order to support the flute when it reaches its lower register in measure 113, Aubert reduces the texture to violins and violas. With the change of mood in measure 117, Aubert mutes the strings and again notates the 16th notes in eighth notes with single tremolos. The mutes shade the strings' color until measure 151 where the winds take over the accompaniment with a sustained V7 chord.

Aubert continues to use similar techniques to orchestrate Fauré's piano accompaniment until measure 186 where he no longer uses the single tremolo to infuse a 16th-note pulse. Instead, the strings provide the harmonies in eighth notes with the first violin following the right hand line of the piano. The tremolos do return in measure 210 and correlate with Fauré's 16th notes throughout the rest of the piece.

In orchestrating Widor's *Romance*, I used a similar instrumentation to that of Aubert, 12(10boe, 1English horn)2(1Bbclarinet, 1bass clarinet)1-2000-stringssolo flute. I included some of the woodwind families' lower instruments (English horn and bass clarinet) to help create the depth and warmer color I had envisioned for the movement. Widor's undulating 16th-note pattern in the accompaniment of the *Romance* was the most challenging aspect of orchestrating this movement. If the accompaniment was only meant to provide a 16th-note pulse then I would have been able to employ Aubert's technique of reducing the continuous 16th-note arpeggios to eighth-note arpeggios, each with a single tremolo. Fauré's original accompaniment figure in measures 142-150, however, simply places the 16th-note arpeggios in an ascending line starting over with each new measure. In comparison, the oscillation of Widor's arpeggiated 16th notes makes the contour of the groups important to the overall sound of the line. Thus, I thought it was necessary to follow Widor's original 16th-note lines as closely as possible.

3. ORCHESTRATING WIDOR'S *ROMANCE*

With knowledge of the overall harmonic and formal structures, I began to orchestrate. (The final orchestration is found in Appendix C.) Some melodic lines are explicit in the piano accompaniment while others are extrapolated from the chords in my harmonic analysis. This addition of parts is necessary to provide the sustained sound of chords comparative to that of a piano. On instruments that play single lines of music, the sound of one note ends with the beginning of the next note unless the acoustics of the performance space carry the sound, thus losing the vertical construction of the chords created by the piano's ability to sustain sound. Two forms of this adaptation of the original accompaniment begin in the second measure: one, the clarinet and violins sustain a dominant harmony for the first two beats and continue to sustain the harmonies dictated by the arpeggios; and two, the cellos and second violins alternate playing the first 16th note of every beat holding it while the violas complete the arpeggios.

Instead of starting the movement with an introduction, Widor hints at a dominant harmony of the movement's key, A-flat Major, with the E-flat in measure one and immediately introduces the flute with the quarter-note pickup to measure two. In order to support the mood of this rich legato melody, I first gave the 16th notes to the violas. In addition to the contrasting color of the instruments, Widor's arpeggios remain below the flute melody crossing above it for the first time in measure 5, which helps attune the listener's ear to the flute line and make

it the focus of the music. I retained Widor's *piano* in the solo flute, viola, lower cello, and bass while marking the added sustained parts in the clarinet, bass clarinet, violins, and upper cello line down to *pianissimo*, since they are meant to be supportive background material. In support of the dynamic increase of the flute melody and its position in a higher register, I added the upper cello line into the 16th-note pattern (m8), providing an additional string timbre. The cellos leave the texture in the next measure (m9) following the diminuendo.

The grace note in the bass line of the piano accompaniment in measure 12 includes both notes of the octave for the first beat of the measure when played on the piano, but does not translate well into instrumental lines. Instead, I divided the cello section so that part of the section would play the lower octave D-flat while others play the D-flat notated as part of the melodic line. The 16th-note line enters the woodwinds for the first time in measure 14 in anticipation of the break in the solo flute line in measure 16. For this first statement of the melody by the piano in Widor's original scoring, I imagined a string sonority. The harp continues the 16th notes while the violins carry the melody with an octave doubling in the cellos. The basses pizzicato the bass line keeping the texture thinner as well as providing a new string sound. The solo flute interjects with the next section of melody in measure 18 only to pass it off to the English horn in measure 20 supported by the winds. Here, the bass pizzicato returns even though the rest of the string section is tacet, and the harp again carries the 16th-note accompaniment. In addition to the doubling of the 16th-note passage that

accompanies the crescendo in measure 24, the bassoon doubles the solo flute's descending line in measures 26 and 27 an octave below. The combination of the flute and bassoon timbres doubled an octave apart is especially complimentary to the flute line as the lower harmonics are emphasized.

With the movement into E-flat Major in measure 30 new melodic material is introduced in the solo flute line. As discussed earlier regarding Chaminade's use of the harp (see page 10), this B section works well if the harp carries the 16th notes and the winds interject with short melodic figures drawn from Widor's original score. Measure 37 serves as a transitional bar into the repetition of the melodic material of measures 30-36. Because the undulating 16th notes briefly stop after the first beat of the measure, it was necessary to add length to the notes in the orchestral accompaniment for the last three beats so that there would not be a hole in the texture. The change from harp to clarinet and bass clarinet is a nice variation in timbre for the repetition of the melodic material beginning in measure 38.

In contrast to the wind and harp sound used for the B section, I returned to an exclusively string sound in measure 46 as the solo flute begins a new melodic idea. The issue of notation again arises with the down beat of measure 52. In the piano accompaniment, the first note of the bar is a quarter-note G that is slurred to the whole note G an octave higher in the next bar meaning that on the piano the sound of this G below the treble staff would be sustained for the entire bar and into the next as long as the string continued to vibrate. Thus, instead of a quarternote, the English horn and the horn hold eight counts of the G with a diminuendo preceding the release to allow their sound to blend back into the sustained chord.

The figures that accompany the *Vivo* section in measure 56 are divided into three distinct groups. Moreover, they are each marked with a different dynamic and translate well into three different groupings of instruments. I chose to use the woodwinds for the first statement. Strictly reed instruments communicate the second statement, and the strings have the third statement. The solo flute line continues with a short chromatic cadenza before the A section returns in measure 64. Measures 64 through 69 are exactly the same as measures 2 through 7. In measure 70, the clarinets help support the crescendo by joining the 16th-note line.

Another break in the solo flute melody in measure 78 allows the English horn to carry the melody in addition to muted first violins and violas. The notation at the end of measure 79 and through measure 80 is similar to that of measure 29. In this case, however, Widor leaves one of the notes as a dotted eighth for every beat, starting on the second sixteenth note of each beat. In order to make this rhythm less jagged, I extended the dotted eighth note to include the first sixteenth note of the next beat. This alteration worked since the extension of each note did not interrupt the harmony of the next beat.

The rolled harp chords between measures 81 and 83 provide yet another new sound for the background harmony. At the same moment, the bassoon and cellos sneak in the last melodic statement from the orchestra before handing the melody back to the flute with the pickup into measure 84. The texture in the last measures of the movement return to a predominantly string sound. With the flute's final note, the harp brings the 16^{th} notes to an end. The last chord from the orchestra follows the flute's release and is simply played by pizzicato strings and the harp whose sustained sound will be the last in the listener's ear.

Conclusion:

This orchestration was formed and entered using *Sibelius*, a music notation program. Consequently, my only aural feedback on the combination of timbres and the realization of the score was through the "Kontakt Player Silver", *Sibelius*' playback feature. The lack of expression in this playback device and the discrepancies in the production of sound based on the entered notations was and continues to be a hindrance to the final musical experience of this piece. My hope is that if this orchestration were to be played, I would have the opportunity to make alterations in the score after working with the ensemble and hearing each instruments contribution to the overall sound.

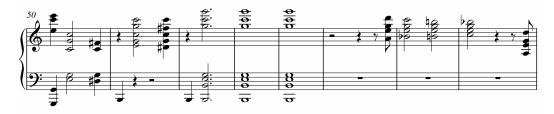
Indeed, there are limitations to using music software programs. *Sibelius*, however, also made it possible for me to easily rearrange parts, copying a melody and inserting it into another instrument's line, or cutting out a section entirely. Having some form of playback helped me recognize when the harmonic texture was too thin or when I had entered a note incorrectly. Moreover, I now have a clean score of my orchestration and the ability to print individual parts.

For the flutist, there is now an available orchestration of Widor's *Romance* and an opportunity to play Widor's rich melodies supported and in dialogue with the many colors and sounds of an orchestra.



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Appendix A. Chordal Reduction













Appendix B	. Formal	Analysis
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Section	[Intro]	А	A'	В	С	А	Coda
Measure	1	2	16	30	46	64	78
Key	Ab Maj	-	Bb min	Eb Maj	C Maj	Ab Maj	-



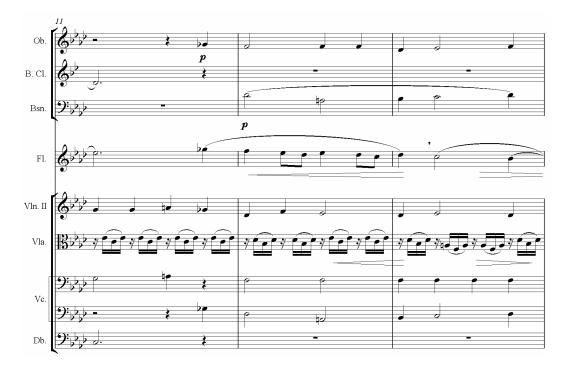
Appendix C: An orchestration of Widor's Suite Op. 34, Romance

Romance Op. 34 No.3









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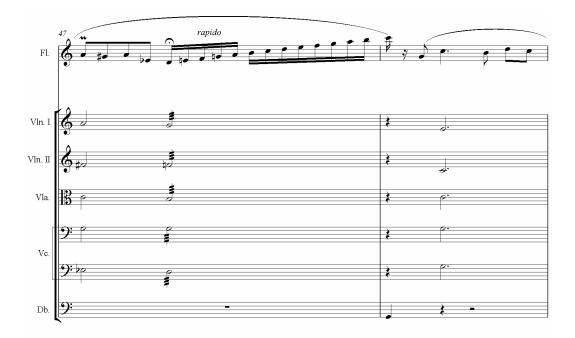




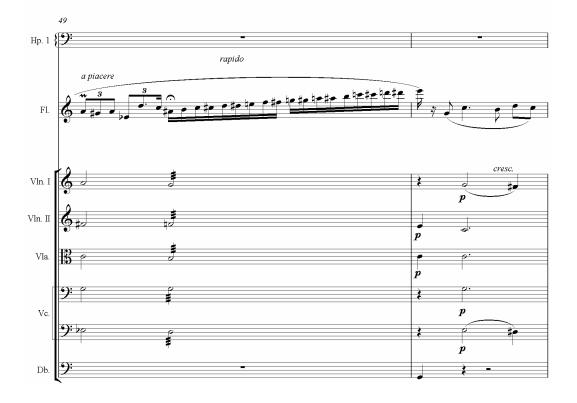








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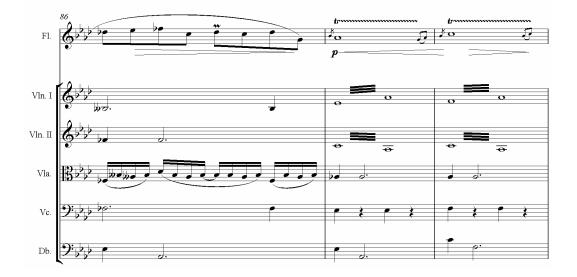


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