f a r m e g n t s

for SATB Octet, SATB Choir and Piano

by Sam C Henderson

cyclescyclescyclesc

Through cycles of darkness
the diamond sleeps in its
coal-black prison.

– fragment from Treasures,
Emma Lazarus

Shall there be yearning for
the sound of voices,
The sight of faces, and the
touch of hands,
The will that works, the
spirit that rejoices,
The heart that feels, the
mind that understands?

Shall dreams and
memories crowding from
the distance,
Shall ghosts of old
ambition or of mirth,
Create for us a shadow of
existence,
A dim reflection of the life
of earth?

– fragment from The House
of Sleep, Robert Fuller
Murray

And I ask my soul what it all
may mean;
If this is the love that should
have been.

And oft and again I
wonder, Can
What God intends be
changed by man?

– fragment from Unfulfilled.,
Madison Julius Cawein

The new years come,
the old years go,
We know we dream,
we dream we know.

…

We hug the world
until it stings,
We curse it then and
sigh for wings.

– fragment from The
Year., Ella Wheeler

Now at last I have come
to see what life is,
Nothing is ever ended,
everything only begun,
And the brave victories
that seem so splendid
Are never really won.

– fragment from At
Midnight, Sara Teasdale

Why make so much of
fragmentary blue
…
When heaven presents in
sheets the solid hue?

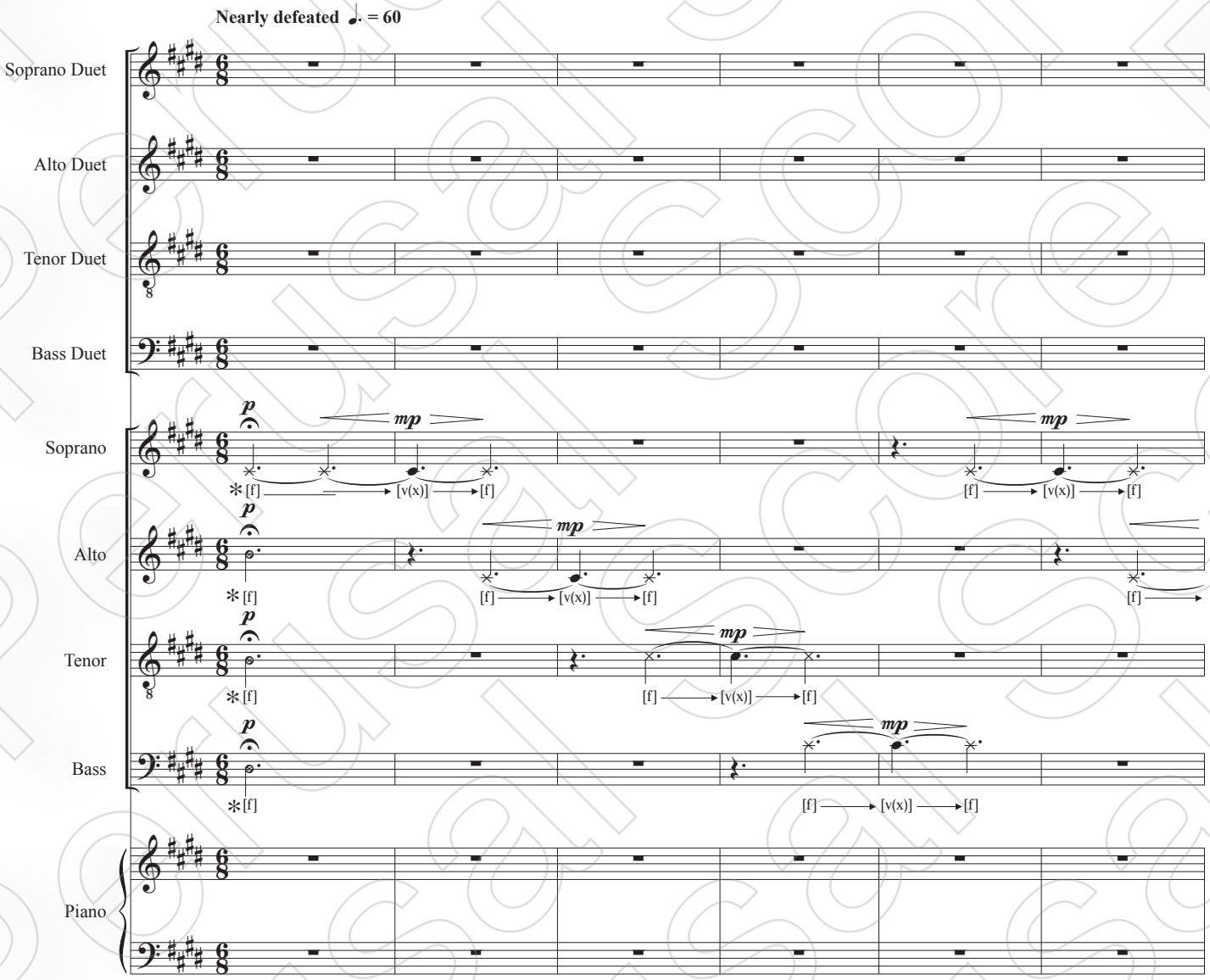
– fragment from
Fragmentary Blue,
Robert Lee Frost

Cycles | Fragments is a reflection on life in quarantine. Each year seems to mirror the previous with little progression forward. Every remote attendance yields a fraction of the authentic experience. Existentialism resides in the shadows of everyday living. Yet even if we have control over seemingly little, we can always guide our perspective. In that way, this is my meditation.

Duration: approx. 4'45"

Cycles | Fragments

Sam C Henderson



* Letters in brackets are to be interpreted according to the corresponding letters in the International Phonetic Alphabet. The letters used in this work are pronounced as follows:
- [a] = "a" in "father"
- [f] = "f" in "faces"
- [m] = "m" in "may"
- [v] = "v" in "love"
- [x] = "ch" in "Bach"
- [ʃ] = "sh" in "shall"

In the case that a pair of brackets houses a letter and a different letter in parentheses, the sounds that result from these two letters are to be performed simultaneously.
In the instance of arrows that connect two bracketed letters together, you are to initiate the sound from the first letter, then over the duration of the given note evenly morph the first sound into the second sound.

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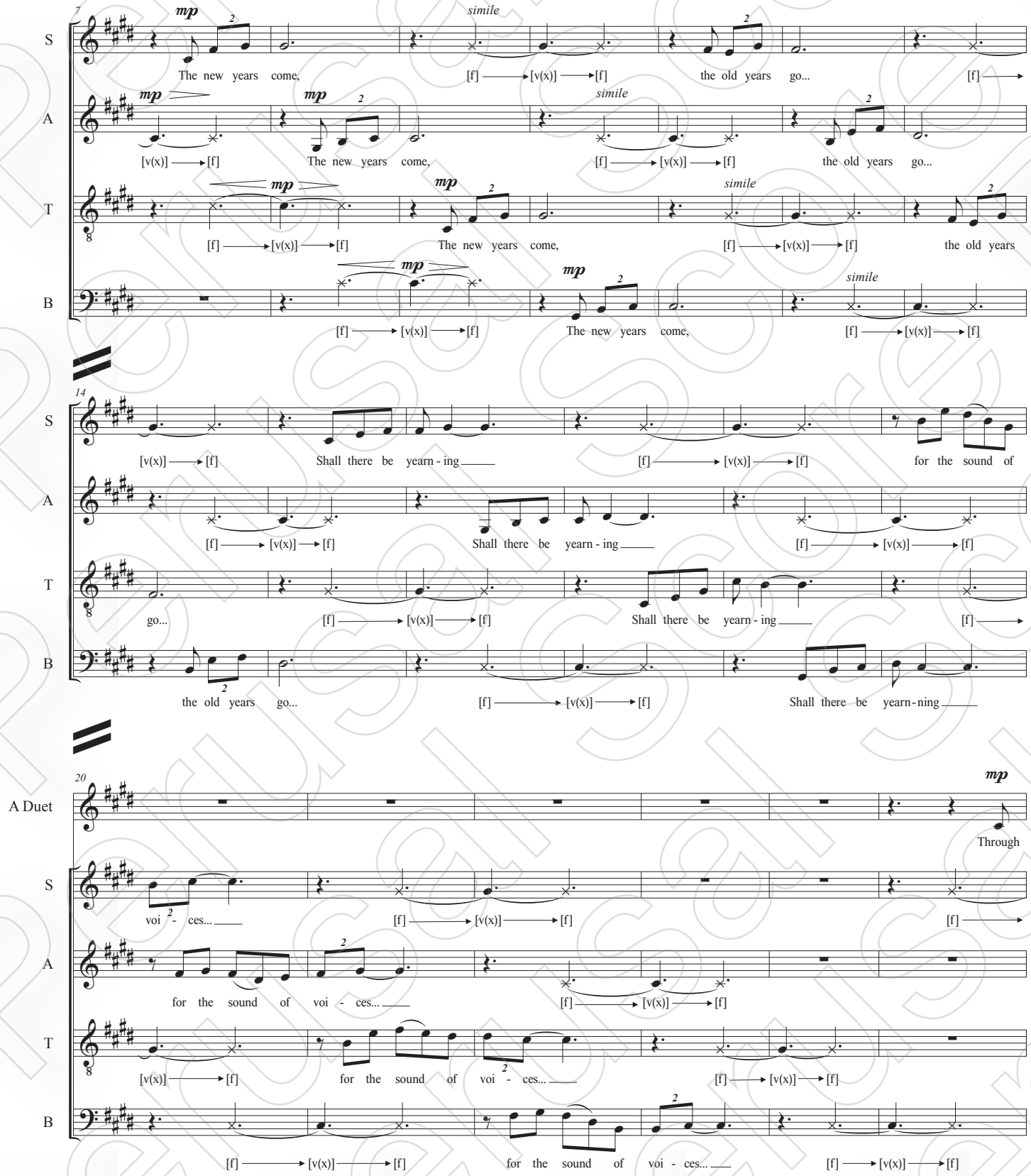
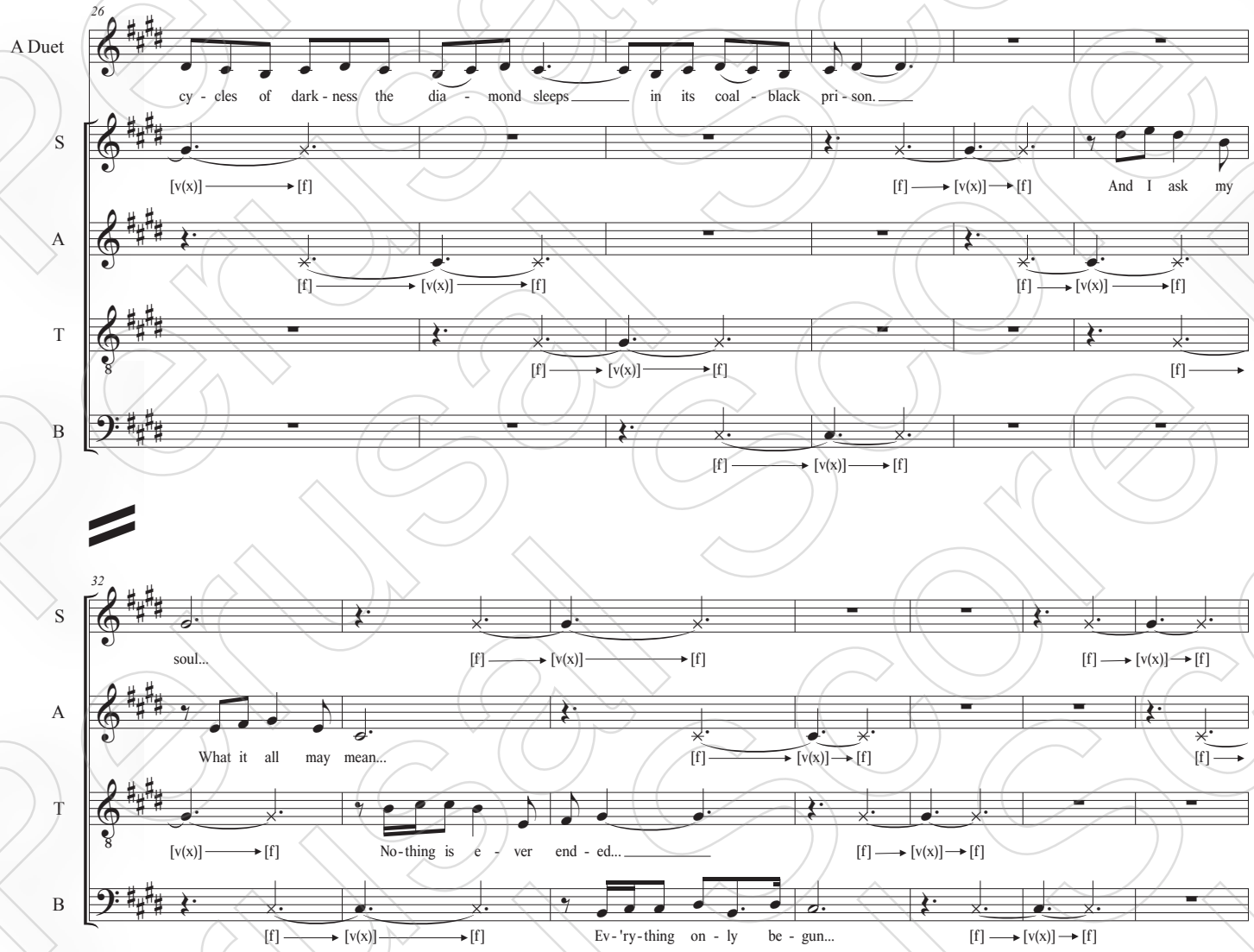
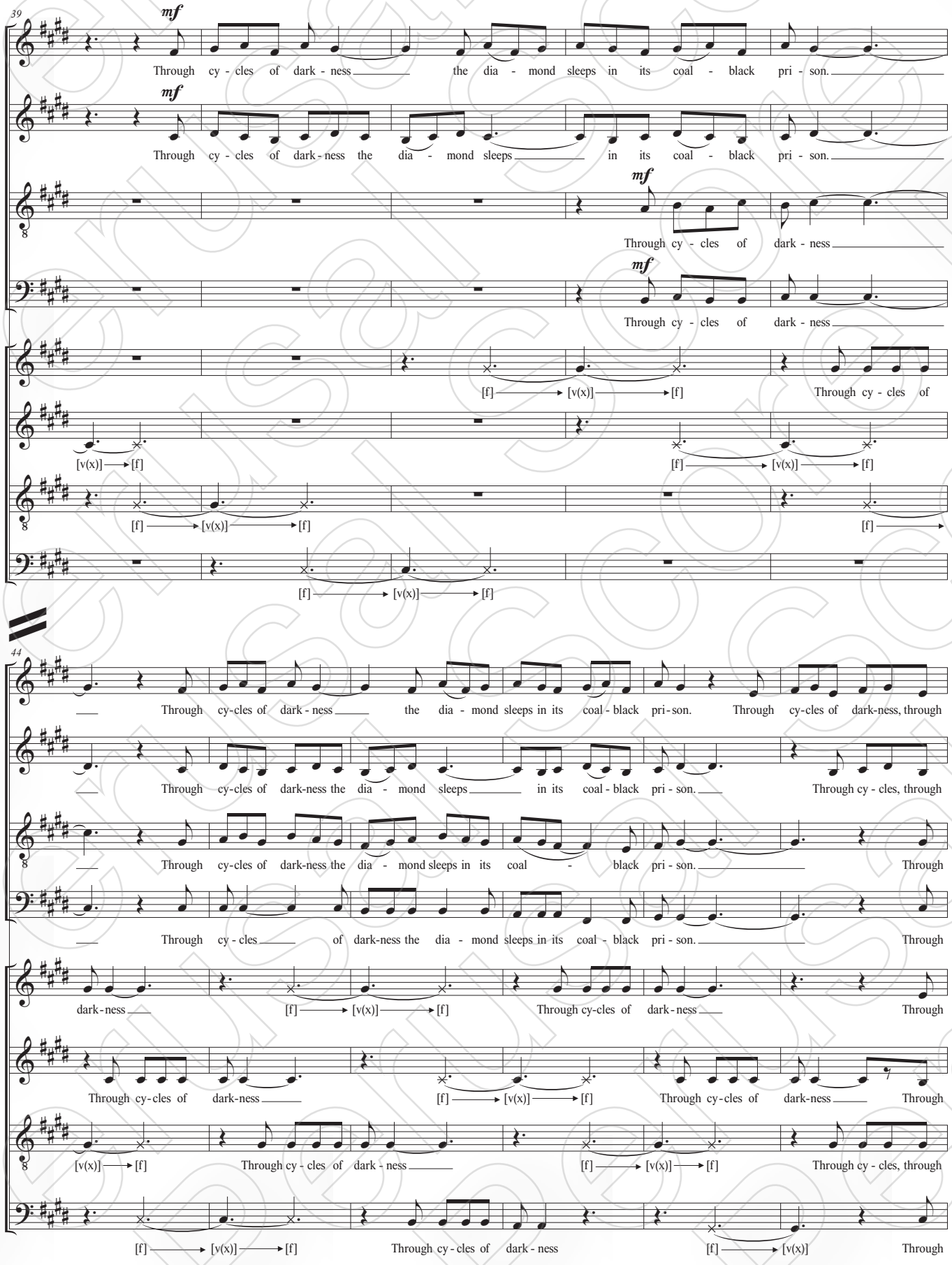
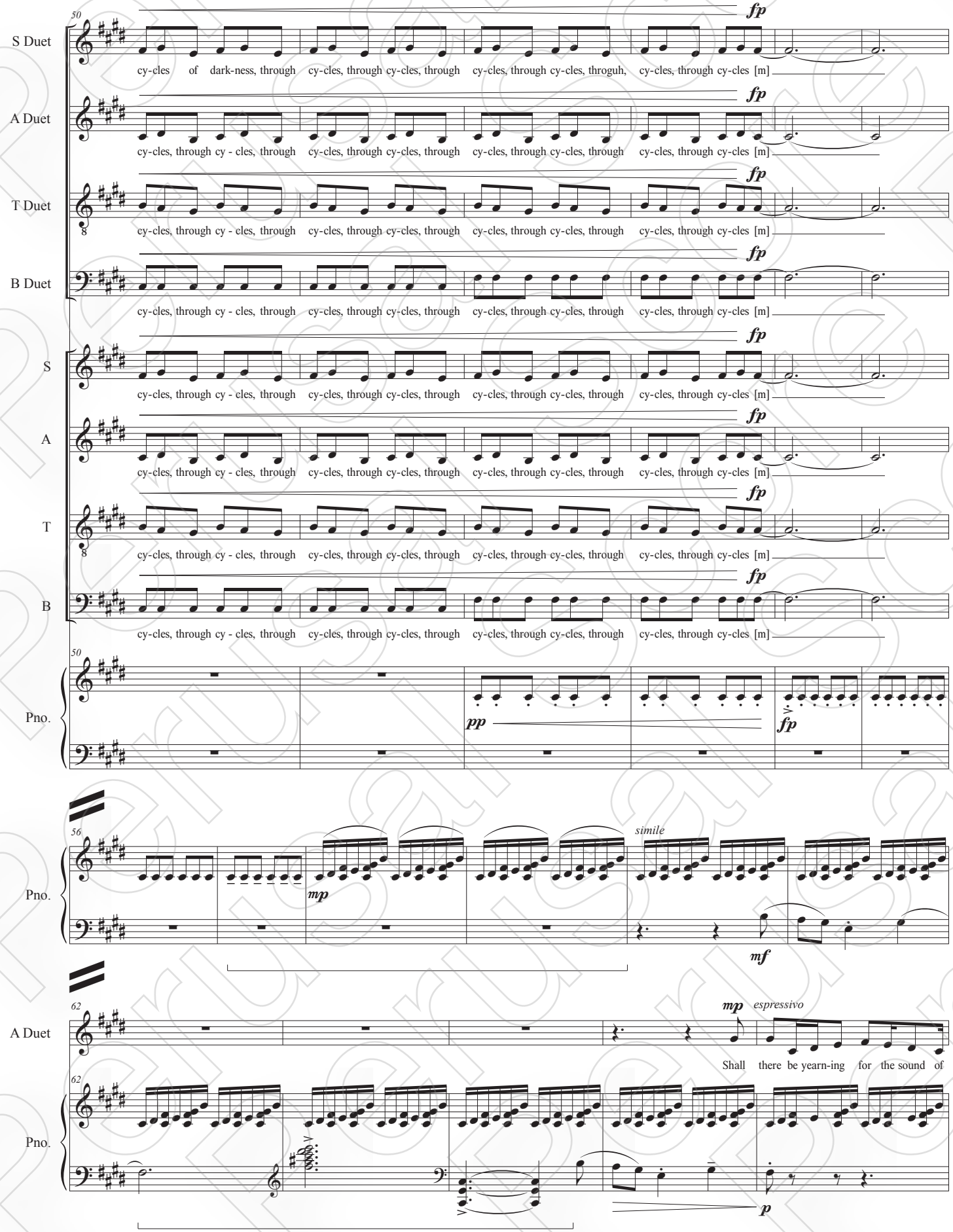
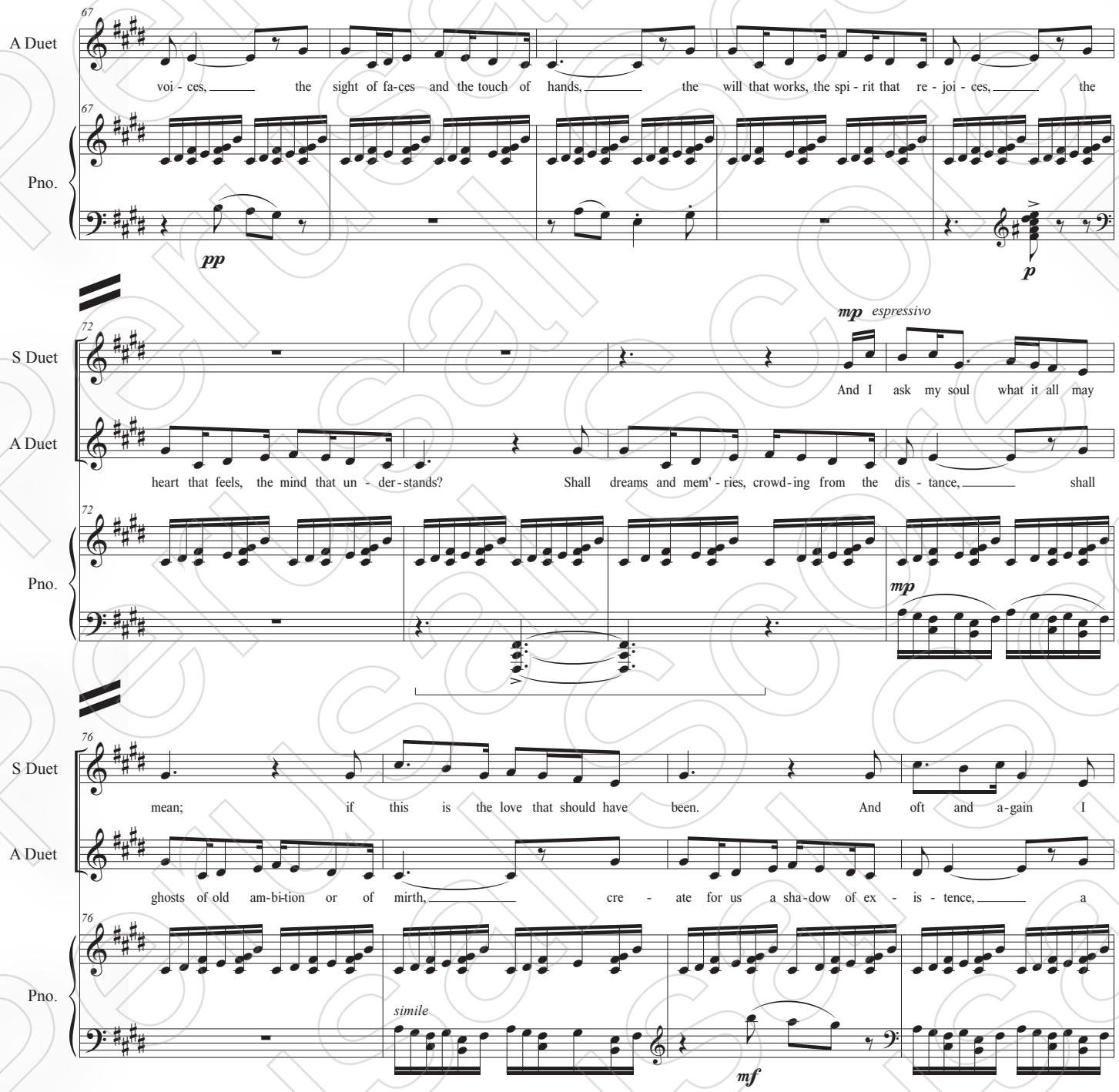
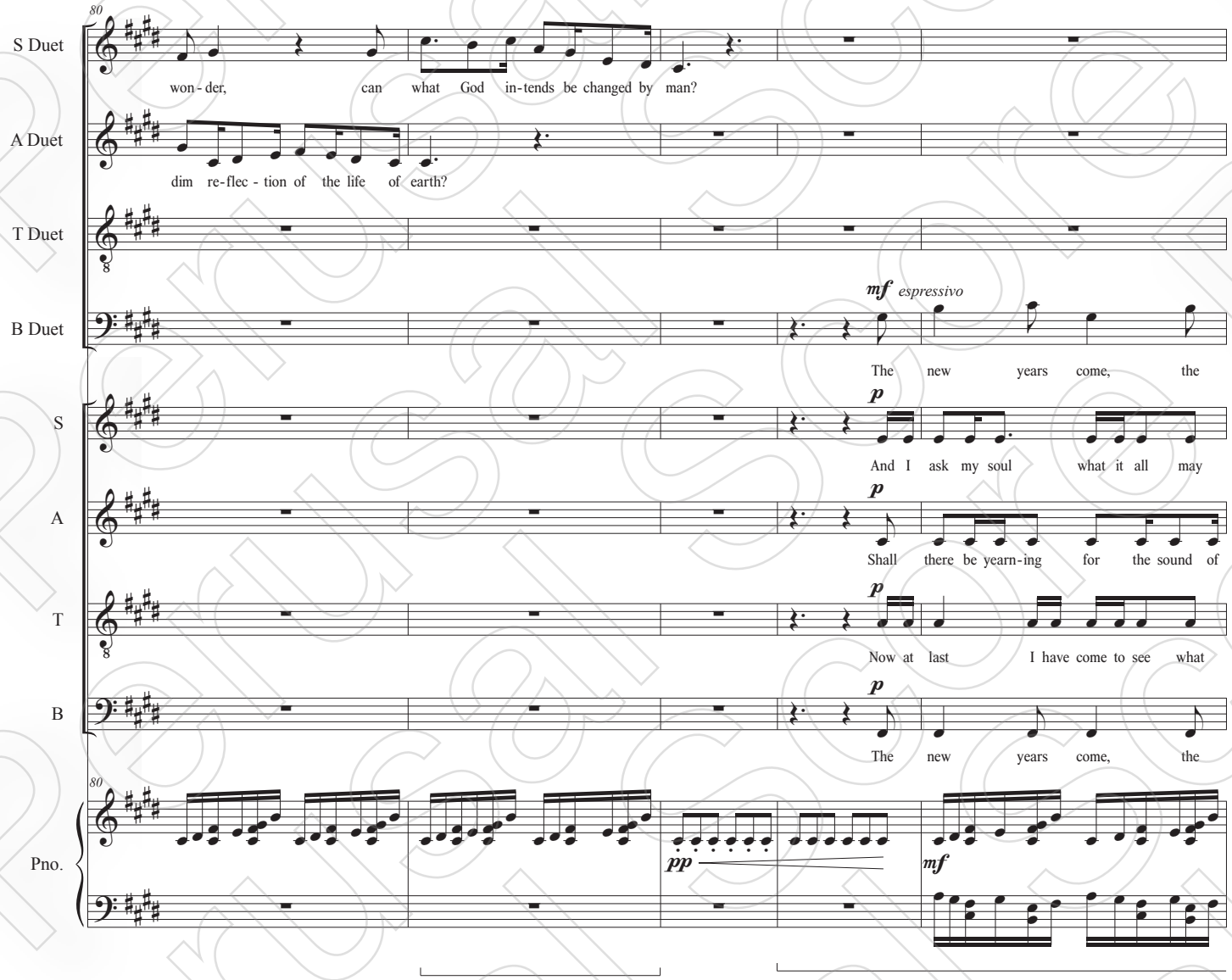

7
S
A
T
B
mp
simile
The new years come,
the old years go...
[v(x)] → [f]
[f] → [v(x)] → [f]
14
Shall there be yearn - ing
for the sound of
go...
the old years go...
Shall there be yearn - ning
20
A Duet
Through
voi - ces...
for the sound of voi - ces...

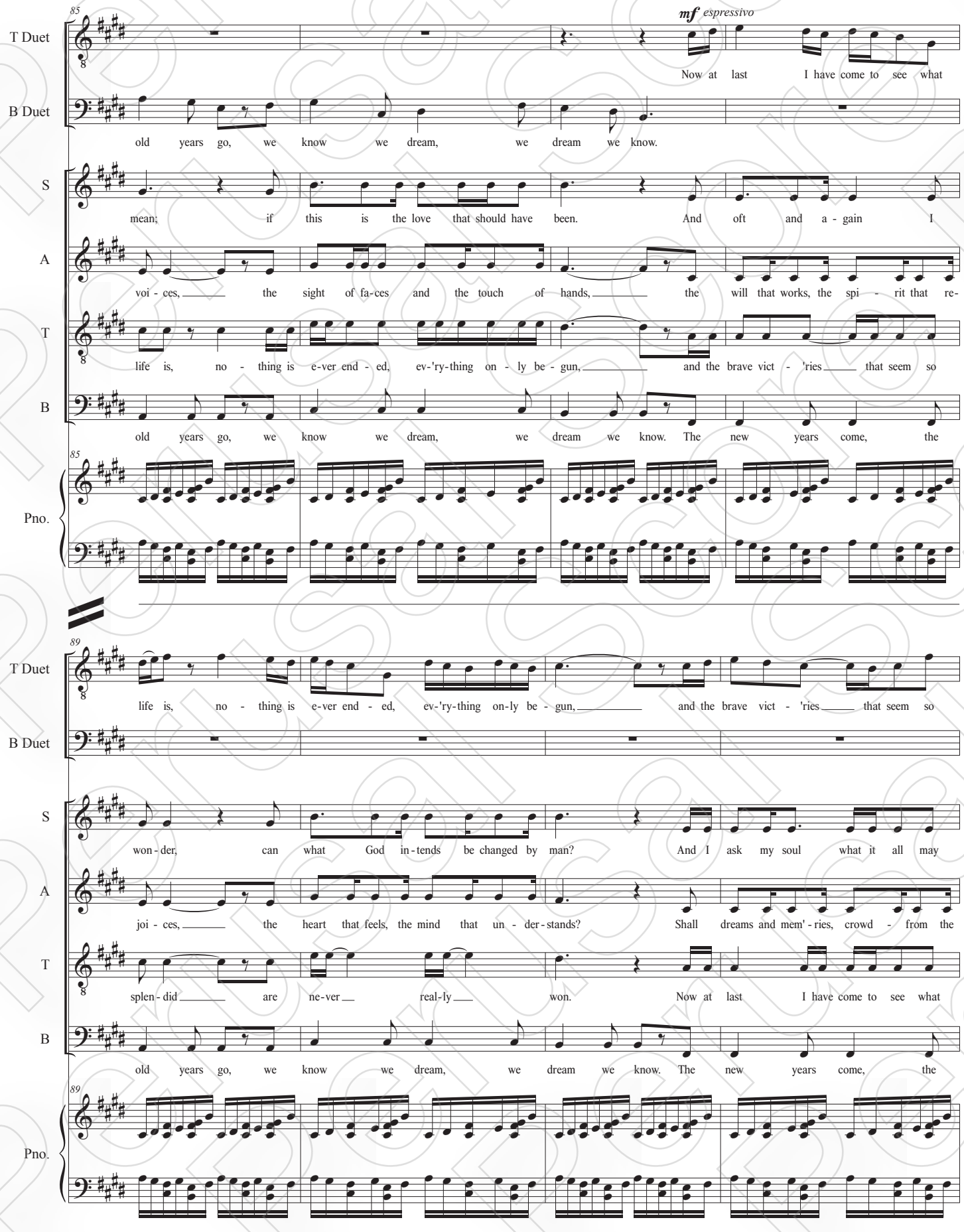

26
A Duet
cy - cles of dark - ness the dia - mond sleeps in its coal - black pri - son.
S
A
T
B
[v(x)] [f]
[f] [v(x)] [f]
And I ask my
32
soul...
What it all may mean...
No-thing is e - ver end - ed...
Ev-'ry-thing on - ly be - gun...

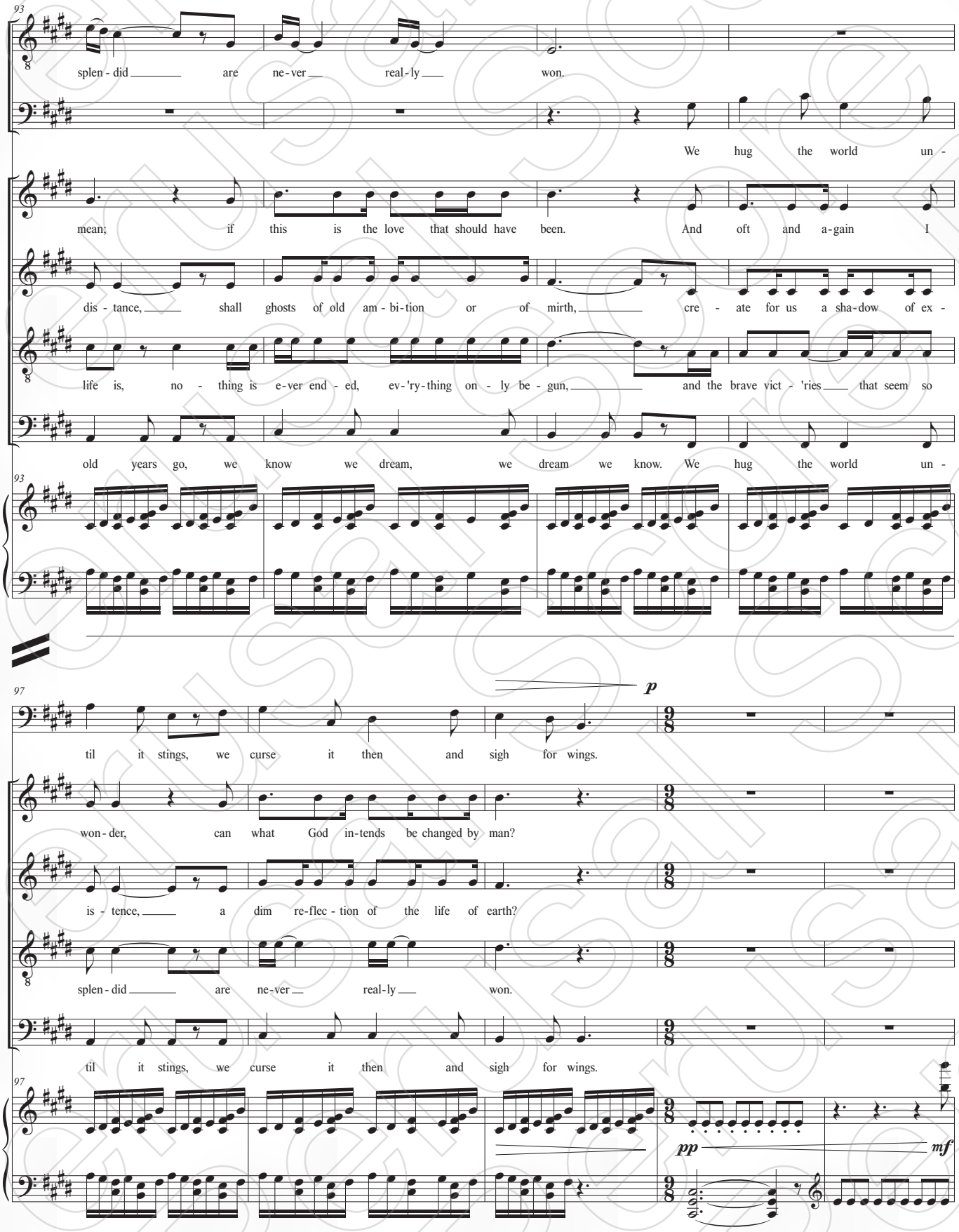

39
S Duet
mf
Through cy - cles of dark - ness the dia - mond sleeps in its coal - black pri - son.
A Duet
mf
Through cy - cles of dark - ness the dia - mond sleeps in its coal - black pri - son.
T Duet
mf
Through cy - cles of dark - ness
B Duet
mf
Through cy - cles of dark - ness
S
[f] [v(x)] [f] Through cy - cles of
A
[v(x)] [f] [f] [v(x)] [f]
T
[f] [v(x)] [f] [f]
B
[f] [v(x)] [f]
44
S Duet
Through cy-cles of dark - ness the dia - mond sleeps in its coal - black pri - son. Through cy-cles of dark-ness, through
A Duet
Through cy-cles of dark-ness the dia - mond sleeps in its coal - black pri - son. Through cy - cles, through
T Duet
Through cy-cles of dark-ness the dia - mond sleeps in its coal - black pri - son. Through
B Duet
Through cy - cles of dark-ness the dia - mond sleeps in its coal - black pri - son. Through
S
dark - ness [f] [v(x)] [f] Through cy-cles of dark - ness Through
A
Through cy - cles of dark-ness [f] [v(x)] [f] Through cy - cles of dark-ness Through
T
[v(x)] [f] Through cy - cles of dark - ness [f] [v(x)] [f] Through cy - cles, through
B
[f] [v(x)] [f] Through cy - cles of dark - ness [f] [v(x)] Through

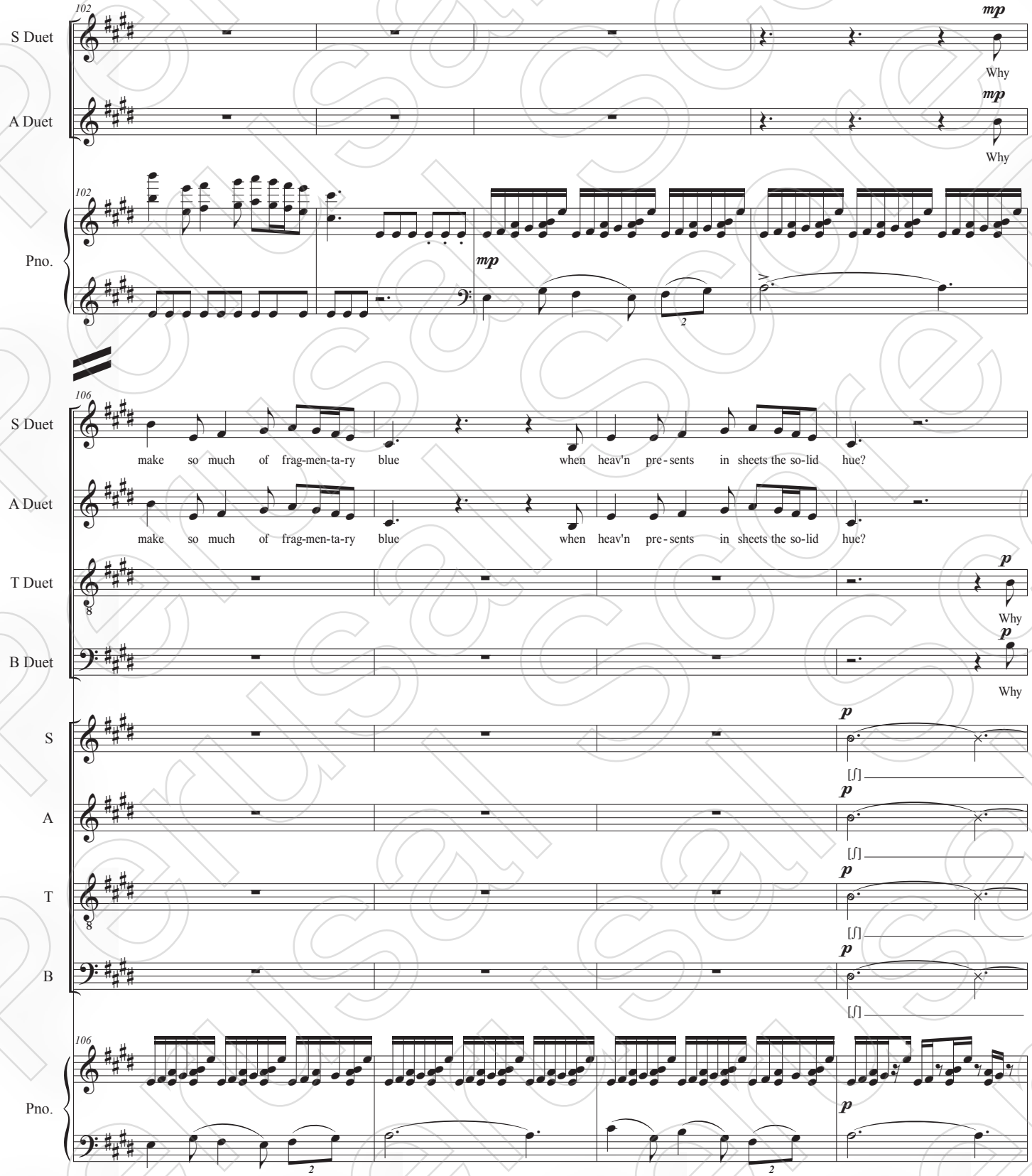

50
S Duet
A Duet
T Duet
B Duet
S
A
T
B
Pno.
fp
cy-cles of dark-ness, through cy-cles, through cy-cles, through cy-cles, through cy-cles, throguh, cy-cles, through cy-cles [m]
cy-cles, through cy - cles, through cy-cles, through cy-cles, through cy-cles, through cy-cles, through cy-cles, through cy-cles [m]
cy-cles, through cy - cles, through cy-cles, through cy-cles, through cy-cles, through cy-cles, through cy-cles, through cy-cles [m]
cy-cles, through cy - cles, through cy-cles, through cy-cles, through cy-cles, through cy-cles, through cy-cles, through cy-cles [m]
pp
56
mp
simile
mf
62
A Duet
Pno.
mp
espressivo
Shall there be yearn-ing for the sound of
p

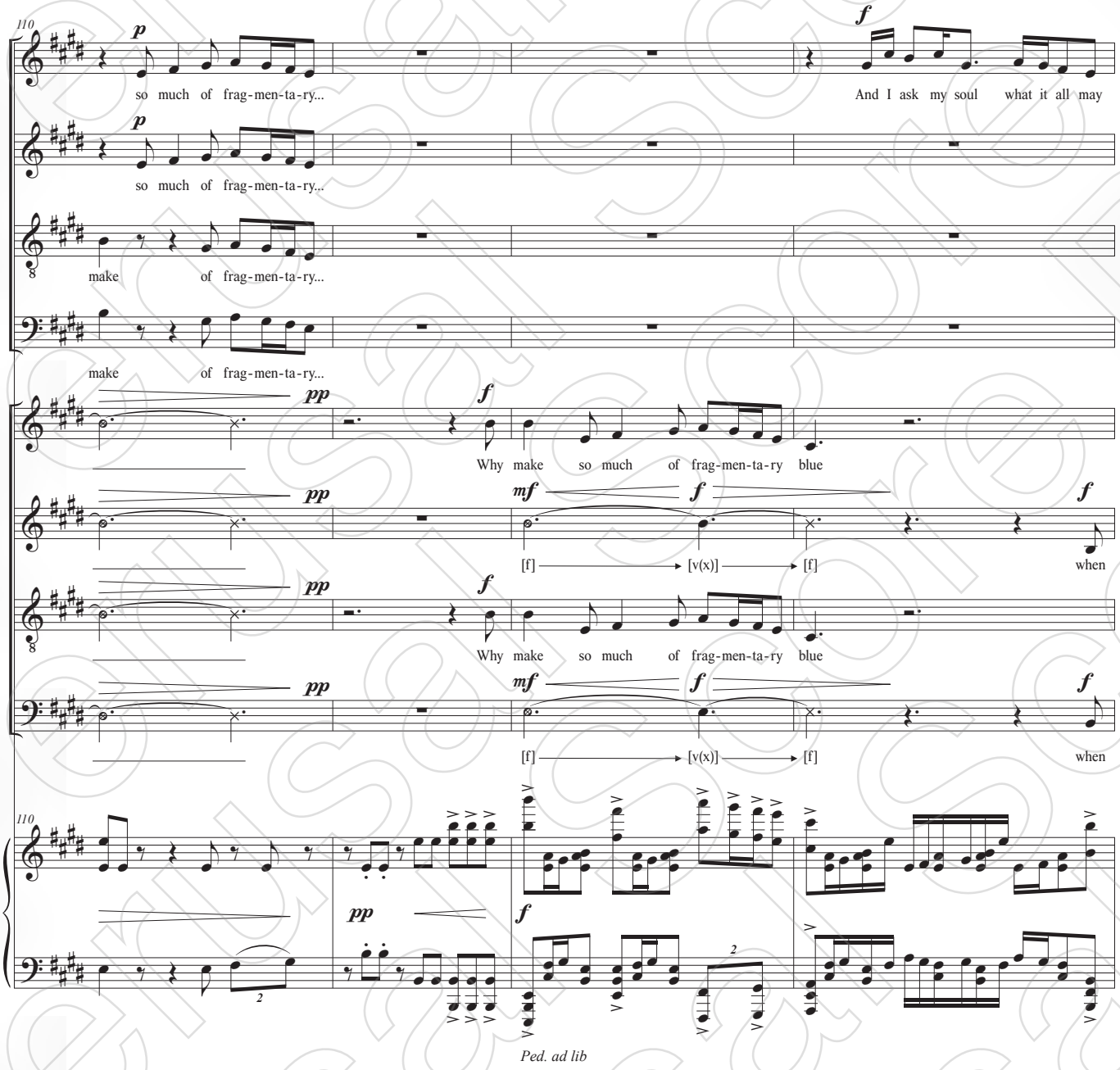

67
A Duet
voi - ces, the sight of fa-ces and the touch of hands, the will that works, the spi - rit that re - joi - ces, the
Pno.
pp
p
72
S Duet
mp espressivo
And I ask my soul what it all may
A Duet
heart that feels, the mind that un - der-stands? Shall dreams and mem' - ries, crowd-ing from the dis - tance, shall
Pno.
mp
76
S Duet
mean; if this is the love that should have been. And oft and a-gain I
A Duet
ghosts of old am-bi-tion or of mirth, cre - ate for us a sha-dow of ex - is - tence, a
Pno.
simile
mf

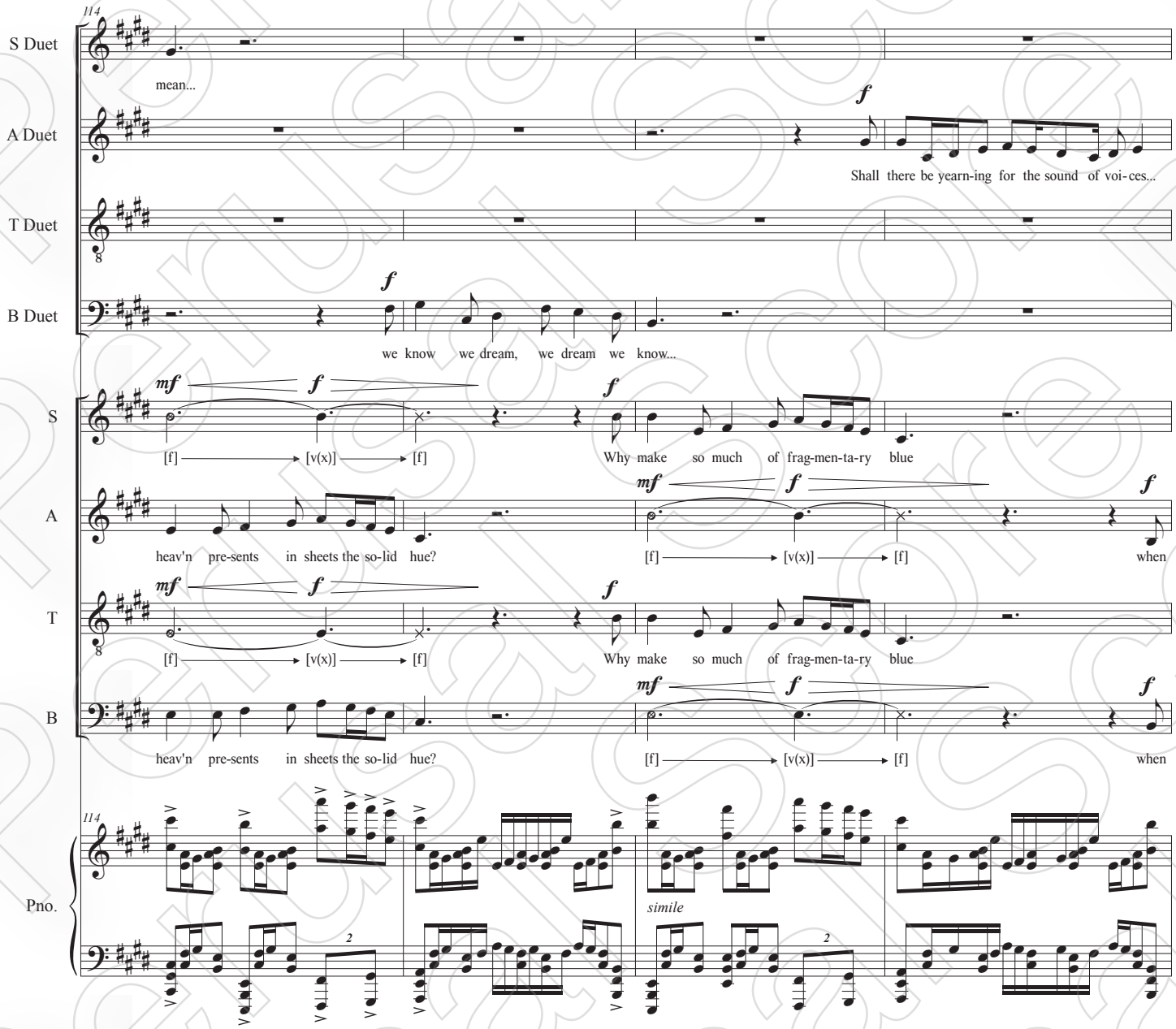

80
S Duet
won - der, can what God in - tends be changed by man?
A Duet
dim re - flec - tion of the life of earth?
T Duet
B Duet
mf espressivo
The new years come, the
S
p
And I ask my soul what it all may
A
p
Shall there be yearn - ing for the sound of
T
p
Now at last I have come to see what
B
p
The new years come, the
80
Pno.
pp
mf

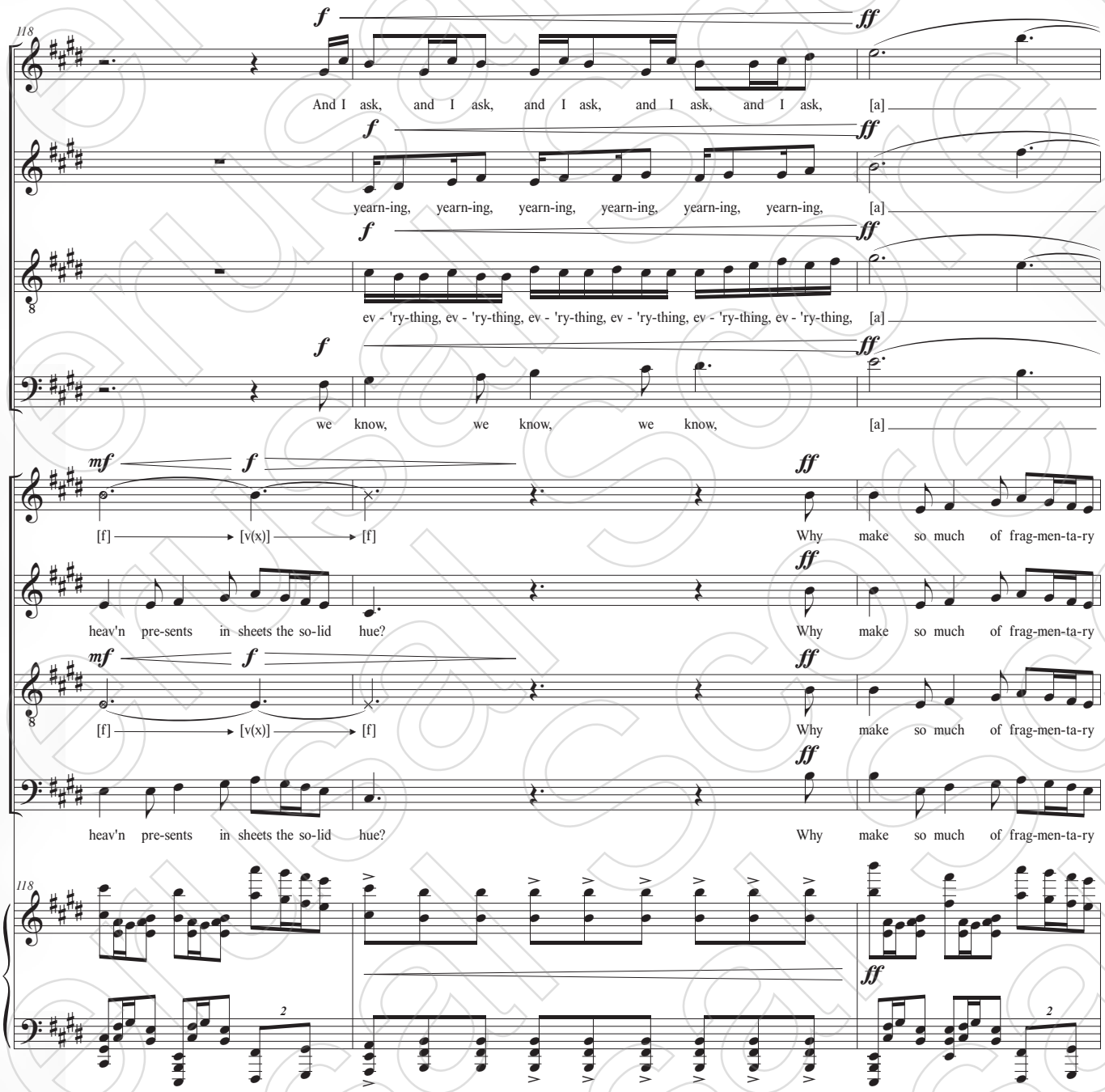

85
mf espressivo
T Duet
Now at last I have come to see what
B Duet
old years go, we know we dream, we dream we know.
S
mean; if this is the love that should have been. And oft and a - gain I
A
voi - ces, the sight of fa-ces and the touch of hands, the will that works, the spi - rit that re-
T
life is, no - thing is e-ver end - ed, ev-'ry-thing on - ly be - gun, and the brave vict - 'ries that seem so
B
old years go, we know we dream, we dream we know. The new years come, the
85
Pno.
89
T Duet
life is, no - thing is e-ver end - ed, ev-'ry-thing on-ly be - gun, and the brave vict - 'ries that seem so
B Duet
S
won - der, can what God in-tends be changed by man? And I ask my soul what it all may
A
joi - ces, the heart that feels, the mind that un - der-stands? Shall dreams and mem' - ries, crowd - from the
T
splen - did are ne-ver real-ly won. Now at last I have come to see what
B
old years go, we know we dream, we dream we know. The new years come, the
89
Pno.

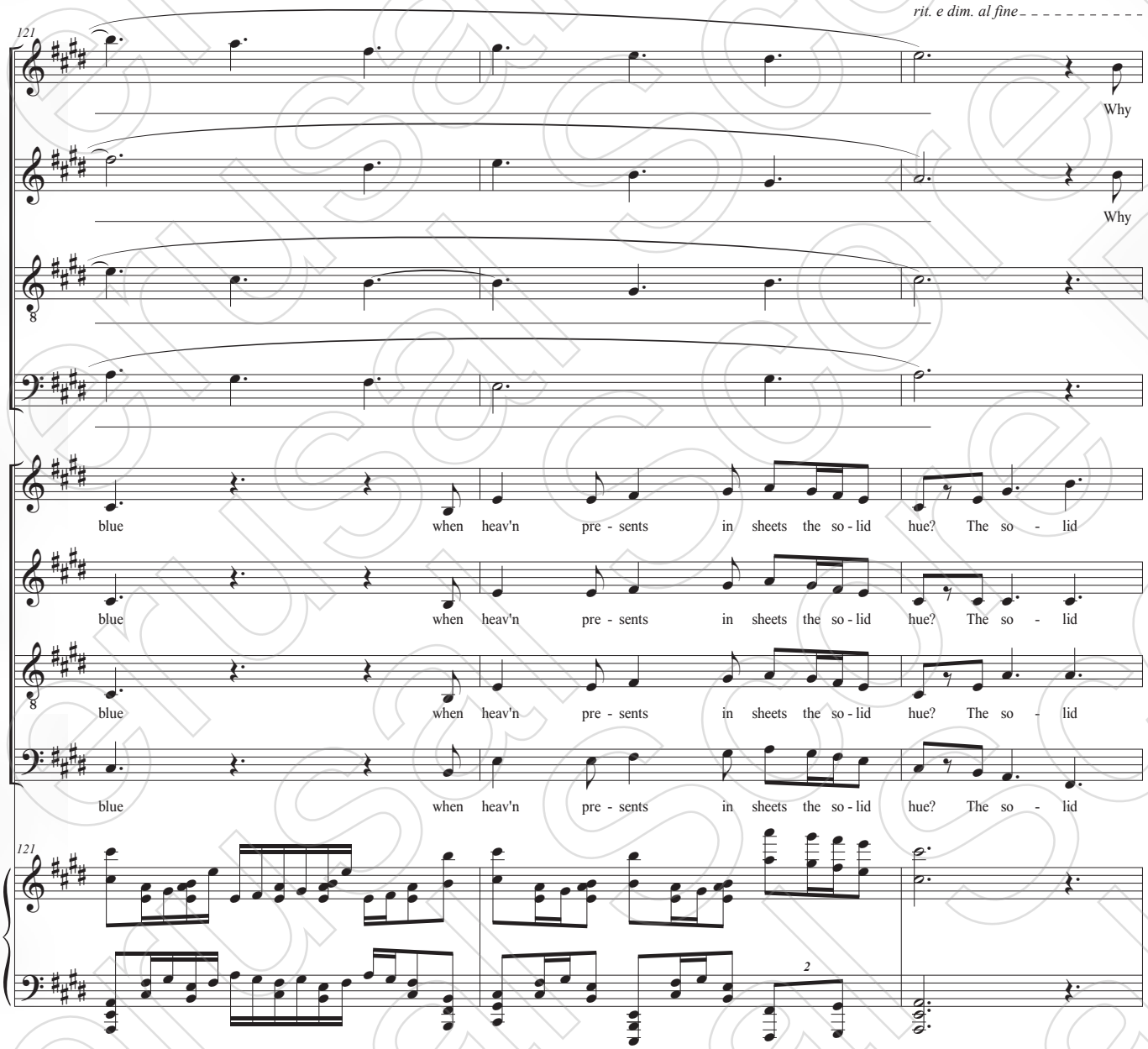

93
T Duet
splen - did are ne - ver real - ly won.
B Duet
We hug the world un -
S
mean; if this is the love that should have been. And oft and a - gain I
A
dis - tance, shall ghosts of old am - bi - tion or of mirth, cre - ate for us a sha - dow of ex -
T
life is, no - thing is e - ver end - ed, ev - 'ry - thing on - ly be - gun, and the brave vict - 'ries that seem so
B
old years go, we know we dream, we dream we know. We hug the world un -
93
Pno.
97
p
B Duet
til it stings, we curse it then and sigh for wings.
S
won - der, can what God in - tends be changed by man?
A
is - tence, a dim re - flec - tion of the life of earth?
T
splen - did are ne - ver real - ly won.
B
til it stings, we curse it then and sigh for wings.
97
Pno.
pp
mf

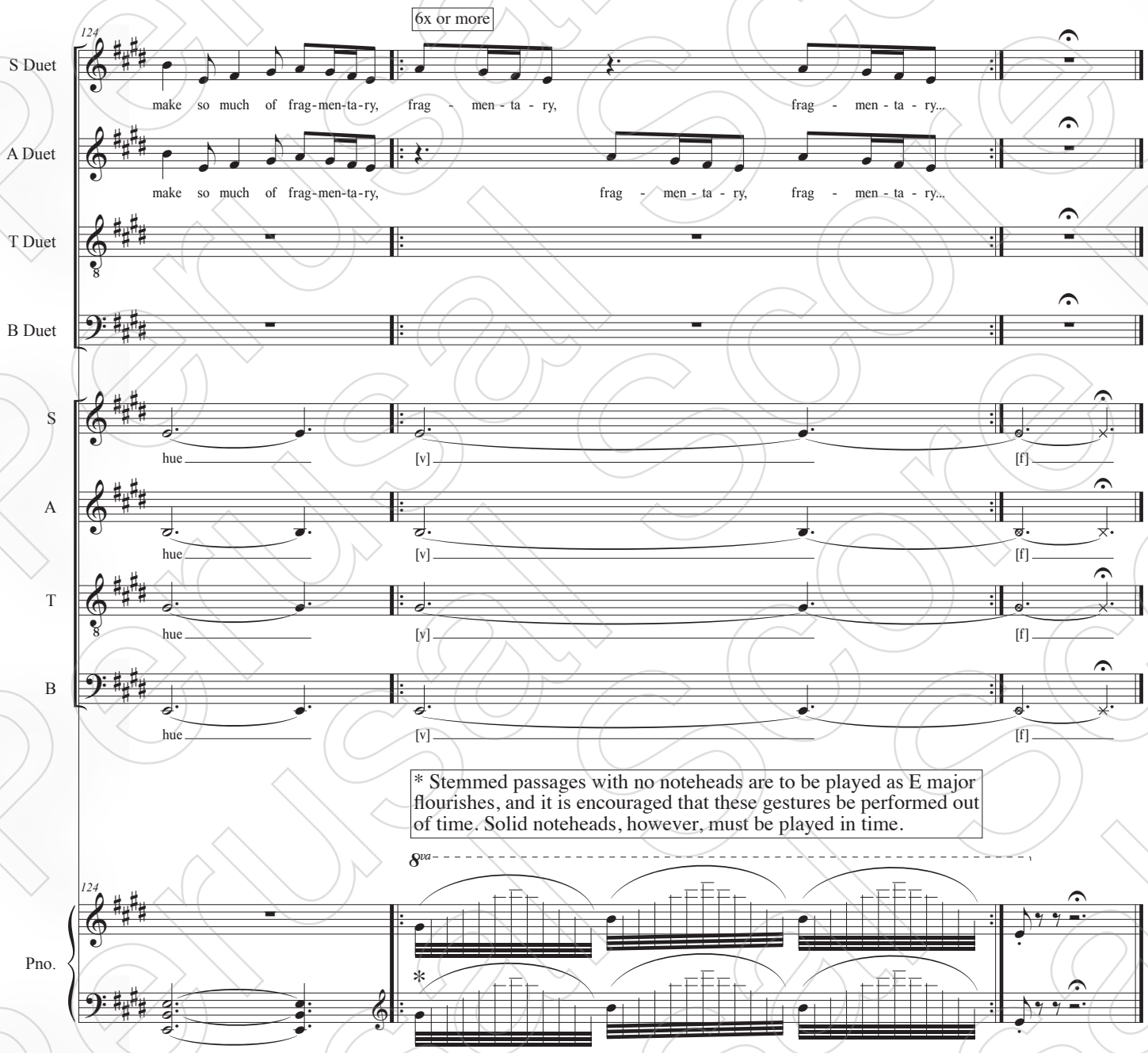

102
S Duet
mp
Why
A Duet
mp
Why
Pno.
mp
106
S Duet
make so much of frag-men-ta-ry blue when heav'n pre-sents in sheets the so-lid hue?
A Duet
make so much of frag-men-ta-ry blue when heav'n pre-sents in sheets the so-lid hue?
T Duet
p
Why
B Duet
p
Why
S
p
A
p
T
p
B
p
Pno.
p


110
S Duet
p
so much of frag-men-ta-ry...
f
And I ask my soul what it all may
A Duet
p
so much of frag-men-ta-ry...
T Duet
make of frag-men-ta-ry...
B Duet
make of frag-men-ta-ry...
S
pp
f
Why make so much of frag-men-ta-ry blue
A
pp
mf
f
f
[f] [v(x)] [f] when
T
pp
f
Why make so much of frag-men-ta-ry blue
B
pp
mf
f
f
[f] [v(x)] [f] when
110
Pno.
pp
f
2
2
Ped. ad lib


114
S Duet
mean...
A Duet
f
Shall there be yearn-ing for the sound of voi-ces...
T Duet
B Duet
f
we know we dream, we dream we know...
S
mf f f
[f] [v(x)] [f]
Why make so much of frag-men-ta-ry blue
A
mf f f
heav'n pre-sents in sheets the so-lid hue?
[f] [v(x)] [f]
when
T
mf f f
[f] [v(x)] [f]
Why make so much of frag-men-ta-ry blue
B
mf f f
heav'n pre-sents in sheets the so-lid hue?
[f] [v(x)] [f]
when
114
Pno.
simile
2
2


118
S Duet
A Duet
T Duet
B Duet
S
A
T
B
Pno.
f
ff
mf
And I ask, and I ask, and I ask, and I ask, and I ask, [a]
yearn-ing, yearn-ing, yearn-ing, yearn-ing, yearn-ing, yearn-ing, [a]
ev - 'ry-thing, ev - 'ry-thing, ev - 'ry-thing, ev - 'ry-thing, ev - 'ry-thing, ev - 'ry-thing, [a]
we know, we know, we know, [a]
[f] [v(x)] [f]
Why make so much of frag-men-ta-ry
heav'n pre-sents in sheets the so-lid hue?


rit. e dim. al fine
121
S Duet
Why
A Duet
Why
T Duet
B Duet
S
blue when heav'n pre - sents in sheets the so - lid hue? The so - lid
A
blue when heav'n pre - sents in sheets the so - lid hue? The so - lid
T
blue when heav'n pre - sents in sheets the so - lid hue? The so - lid
B
blue when heav'n pre - sents in sheets the so - lid hue? The so - lid
121
Pno.
2


6x or more
124
S Duet
make so much of frag-men-ta-ry, frag - men - ta - ry, frag - men - ta - ry...
A Duet
make so much of frag-men-ta-ry, frag - men - ta - ry, frag - men - ta - ry...
T Duet
B Duet
S
hue [v] [f]
A
hue [v] [f]
T
hue [v] [f]
B
hue [v] [f]
* Stemmed passages with no noteheads are to be played as E major flourishes, and it is encouraged that these gestures be performed out of time. Solid noteheads, however, must be played in time.
8va
124
Pno.
*