

the master of such moments

by Marina Kifferstein, for Charlotte Mundy

text by Anne Carson, excerpts from [“The Albertine Workout”](#)

premiered in May 2016 on the Resonant Bodies Festival, at Roulette (Brooklyn, NY)

24. The state of Albertine that most pleases Marcel is Albertine asleep.
25. By falling asleep she becomes a plant, he says.
26. Plants do not actually sleep. Nor do they lie or even bluff. They do, however, expose their genitalia.
27. a) Sometimes in her sleep Albertine throws off her kimono and lies naked.
27. b) Sometimes then Marcel possesses her.
27. c) Albertine appears not to wake up.
28. Marcel appears to think he is the master of such moments.
30. Albertine’s laugh has the colour and smell of a geranium.
32. Albertine’s eyes are blue and saucy. Her hair is like crinkly black violets.
- 58.

Un cygne d’autrefois se souvient que c’est lui

Magnifique mais qui sans espoir se délivre

Pour n’avoir pas chanté la région où vivre

Quand du stérile hiver a resplendi l’ennui

(Mallarmé, ‘Le vierge, le vivace et le bel aujourd’hui’)

a swan of olden times remembers

that it is he:

the one

magnificent but

without hope setting himself free

for he failed to sing

of a region for living

when barren winter

burned all around him with *ennui*

Performance notes

Both:

The two performers should set up with their stands facing one another. When possible, the soprano should deliver text facing the audience.

All repeat bars are to be repeated ad lib, to accompany the soprano's text.

All movement/performance instructions are contained within {fancy brackets}, and are optional. Feel free to ignore them, or to create additional or entirely different choreography as you see fit.

All reminders are contained within (parentheses); all expressive text is in *italics*; all technical indications are in normal text.

In the vocal staves,  = exhale;  = inhale

x noteheads indicate non-pitched or non-pitch specific sounds; “t” is a short, sharp sound (no vowel); “(p)” is an indication to suddenly close the mouth to cut off an inhale or exhale, which might create a small pop, like an audio file clipped in the middle of a note; “p” is a short, plosive sound (no vowel).

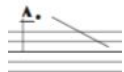


Moaning graphic – begin at indicated pitch, and move into a moaning sound, as if bored or in pain.

Soprano:

In measure 1, imitate the violin “scatter pizz” technique to the best of your ability. This could mean rapid bursts of consonants (k, t, p, d, etc.), or something else if you feel so inclined.

All large font text (e.g. m. 3) is delivered in a normal speaking voice, as if narrating.



All triangle noteheads are whistles, similar to the violin “seagull gliss.”

All x noteheads indicate spoken text. In the section from mm. 32-48, each phrase smoothly transitions from sung to spoken.

Violin:

The violinist has two staves: Violin (Vln) and Voice (vln vox), indicated to the left of the system. Empty systems are not shown.

Scatter pizz: use multiple fingers on both the right and left hands to rapidly pluck muted or stopped strings. Try not to catch too many open strings – pitches should be “scattered” and random, and the sonic outcome should be largely percussive. It is much easier to do this with the bow down.



“crunch” graphic indicates overpressure on dampened strings, like a snore.

Seagull gliss: maintain the same hand position as you gliss down, catching different partials.

Harmonic scatter: move a left hand finger up and down the string with harmonic pressure to rapidly activate different random partials.

Trichord: bow molto sul tasto at the point where all three indicated notes speak simultaneously.

the master of such moments

commissioned by Charlotte Mundy for the Resonant Bodies Festival, 2016

Text by Anne Carson, from "The Albertine Workout"

Marina Kifferstein

Soprano

Violin

imitate violin (improvise)
high energy/dense - - - - - low energy/sparse

(bow down)
scatter pizz
high energy/dense - - - - - low energy/sparse

sop

vln vox

(voice) (speak) (take bow)

The state of Alberine that most pleases Marcel is Albertine asleep.

t t t t t t t t t t

sop

Vln.

whistle

(violin) crunch

mp

III seagull gliss

♩ = 40 mp

♩ = 160

♩ = 40/senza misura

(p) t t t t t t t

sop

Vln.

By falling asleep she becomes a plant, he says.

I LH pizz

(bow down) scatter pizz

♩ = 160 fz p

ff

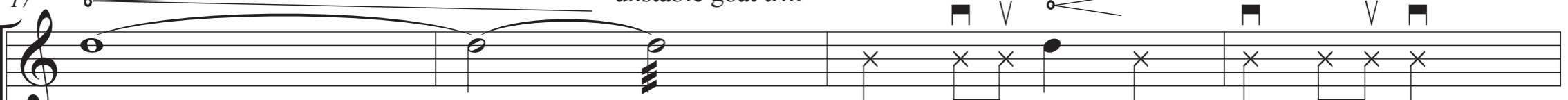
10 III IV

sop Plants do not actually sleep.  Nor do they even bluff!

(voice) t t t t t t


vln vox 

t t t t t t t t t t t t t t t t


17  unstable goat trill


sop m - - - A - - - (p) A (p) (Ha) (p)

(take bow) (Both: maybe giggle a little)

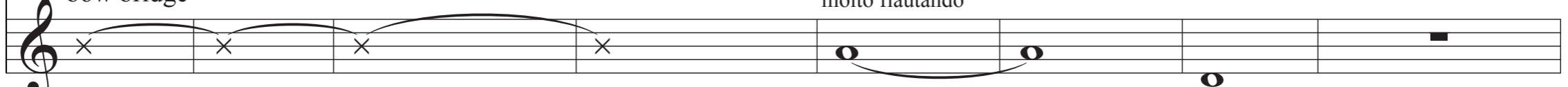
vln vox 

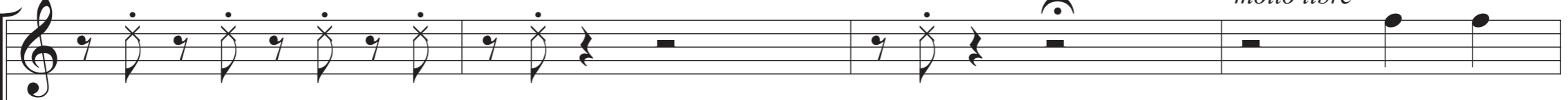
t t t t t t t t t t t (Ha) (p)

tempo libre sop They do, however  *suddenly serious* a tempo t t t t t t t t t Ex- pose their *quasi spoken* *big operatic cadenza* nitalia Ge-


vln vox 

t t t t t t t t t t t t t

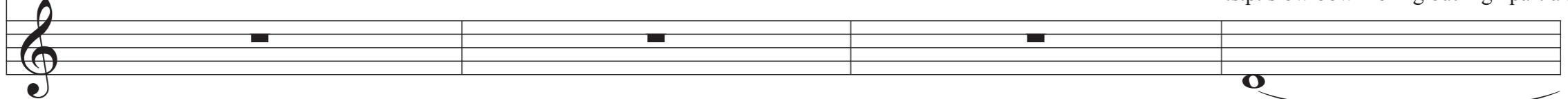
21 *bow bridge* *s.p. molto flautando* 

29 sop  *mp* *molto libre* = 40 Some - times

t t t t t trail off, not necessarily in time t

vln vox 

t t t t t t t

29 *m.s.p. slow bow – bring out high partials*  *p*

33

sop

Al - ber - tine throws off her ki - mo - no and lies na - ked. Some-times then Mar - cel pos - ses - ses her.

Vln.

almost a whisper

sop

Albertine appears not to wake up

{silently mouth text along with violinist}

vln vox

(speak)

Marcel seems to think he is the master of such moments.

Vln.

36 bridge/dampen strings

pp

38 tempo libre whistle

sop

Al - ber - tine's laugh has the co - lor and smell of a ge - ra - ni - um.

Vln.

38 seagull gliss III IV: harmonic scatter

♩ = 56

41

sop

Al - ber - tine's eyes are blue and sau - cy. Her ha - ir is like crin - k - ly black vio - le - ts.

Vln.

41 trichord -> harmonic scatter over pressure -> ord to m.s.t. (for trichords)

rit.

Agitated ♩ = 170

47

sop Albertine's face is sweet and beautiful from the front

vln vox t t t t t t t t

Vln. *slow, out of time like a distant accordion* III

53 {Smile}

sop But from the side has a hook-nosed aspect that fills Marcel with horror!

vln vox t t t t t t t t t t t t t t

{Turn head over shoulder to face audience, smile}

57 *tense*

sop he would take her face in his hands and t

vln vox t

{Both: stare silently at each other in horror for a little too long}

60

sop t t t t p t p p t p p t p p t p p

vln vox t t t t t p p t p p t p p t p p

65 *moaning* *breathy*

sop A t t A A 5 - (p) in his

vln vox t p t t p t t p A p t t p t t

*Ideally, this section (mm. 58-71) should be memorized. The two players should not break eye contact.

70

sop

p t p p t p p t in his in his hands and

vln vox

t p p t p p t p

73

sop

p t p p in his hands and p t p p t p p t

vln vox

t p p t t p p t p p t p

77

sop

he would take her face in his hands and

{Both: take chin in one hand, somewhat aggressively}

reposition it.

{Both: with hands, reposition face from chin to face front}

vln vox

t t t t

{Then, turn body fully to face front}

♩ = 80

like a silent scream

81

sop

fff Hæ (p) *mf* Hæ (p) *p* hæ (p)

maybe another quiet burst or two of solo scatter pizz, as you turn back to face your music

81

vln.

scatter pizz

ff *mf* *p*

87 **Chanson** ♩ = 70 *mf*

sop *mf* Un cygne d'au-tre fois

Vln. pizz, like a harp *mf*

93 **Lent** *p*

sop se sou - vie - nt que - c' est lui Mag - ni - fique

Vln.

98 *a tempo* *mp*

sop mais qui - sans es - poir se dé - livre

Vln. *a tempo*

104 *cresc.* *f*

sop Pour n'a - voir pas chan - té la ré - gion où vivre

Vln.

111 *mf* *dim.* *morendo*

sop Quand du sté - rile hi - ver a re - splen - di l'en - nui

Vln.